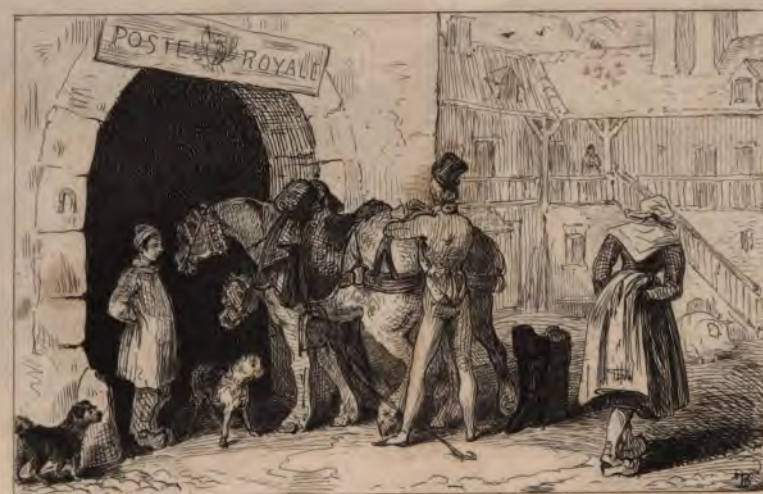
SLIGHT

REMINISCENCES.



A French Post-House

SLIGHT REMINISCENCES OF THE RHINE, SWITZERLAND, AND A CORNER OF ITALY.

"MEN SHOULD MAKE DIARIES," SAID A WISE COUNSELLOR, AND WOMEN FANCY THAT THEY SHOULD DO THE SAME.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO

THE DEAR COMPANION

OF

MY JOURNEY AND MY LIFE,

THESE PAGES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

I MUST say a word or two by way of preface.—Every book seems to require an introductory line, and a Tour (generally speaking) needs an excuse. To a certain extent it must be a record of errors. If it be worth any thing, it is as a transcript of real feelings, and unborrowed observations. But as every eye sees its object through a separate medium, each new account will probably differ in many points from previous and received details, according to the influence of circumstances. A bright day brings out beauty, and a cloudy sky

SLIGHT

REMINISCENCES.

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SLIGHT REMINISCENCES.

CHAPTER I.

CALAIS—SAINT OMER—CASSEL—LILLE—TOURNAY TO BRUSSELS.

Calais, June, 182–.

To one who has coasted the shores of New Holland, looked in at Sydney Cove, passed some comfortable months amongst the seals and blubber-eaters of Winter Island, doubled the Cape, and felt quite at home at St. Helena, the mere act of crossing the Channel seems like stepping over a gutter. But after twelve hours' experience of the horrors of a steam-packet, I must say that I know of few items in the catalogue of minor miseries more perfect in its way, than a trip (as it is called) from the Tower Stairs to Calais. What a chapter of inflictions! Tedium,—nausea,

—six hours of the languid irritation resulting from intense heat, confinement, and idleness, and six more of that dance of death, that ghastly dalliance with the great stomach-pump, for which our language has no adequate name:—now hoisted up on one billow, then shooting downwards on another; head throbbing—throat bursting. A popular traveller has expressed his surprise that the poets have made no use of sea-sickness in their descriptions of Tartarus; it is not so poetical as the bunch of grapes, or the unceasing wheel, but make it interminable, and neither Dante, nor Louis Onze could have imagined any thing more effective. O! for the dust of the Dover road, and the enlivening whirl of four post-horses. Better to be half suffocated in a six-inside stage, than to sit for twelve mortal hours, inhaling the mingled effluvia of grease and bilge-water; for the kitchen was in full activity the whole morning, and *ladies* ate fried mutton and fat ham, and then reeled into their berths, and tucked themselves in, and got frightened when they saw the waves reflected in the looking-glass.

Unquestionably, as an exhibition of vulgar, unsentimental wretchedness, nothing approaches the cabin of a packet-boat. I looked into it for a moment, but soon returned to my station in the

carriage on deck, and rolling myself up into a corner, enjoyed the full benefit of the sea breeze, and a half exemption from sights and sounds of misery; from the livid faces and terrified "God bless us!" or "Dear sir, how rough it is!" of the sufferers. A young medical student was the only person who really enjoyed himself (mentally and physically) in the general confusion. It was evidently the first time of his being *called in*, and he flew about with the most provoking air of full-blown felicity, offering sal volatile, feeling pulses, and smirking at our miseries, as if they had been inflicted solely for his professional improvement.

The country about Calais has to an English eye a rough, ragged, untrimmed air. The fences are straggling, the grass knotted, the village streets foul and unswept; hillocks of mud and pools of water in one place,—bones, putrid vegetables, and broken crockery in another; all sorts of unseemly and offensive accumulations, and women paddling through or striding over them, who are themselves the very perfection of neatness. I love the dark religious cloak, the neat stocking, and glittering ear-rings of the girls at Calais, and above all, the well-bleached cornette,—that snowy cornette, with its ample double border, skilfully clear-starched, which so well becomes the fresh brown com-

plexion, and even helps off the tarnished one. What a beautiful virtue is cleanliness! It certainly is a virtue, for its observance betters the mind. *We* possess, and practise it to a high degree in our houses, our streets, and, above all, in our persons, until we descend to their race of grisettes, and then the French girls throw us quite into the back ground. The smartest thing alive is a young grisette, as she brushes by you with her brisk, upright air and natural gentility, that quite puts out, not only the sloppish attempts at finery, but even the (sometimes) very pretty faces of our girls of the same class.

Order; fertility,—the result of labour; the narrow dimensions and exact neatness of the cottages; a diffused population;* the nuisance of turnpikes, and the absence of beggars, are amongst the home features which the eye of an English traveller instantly recognises on returning to his native country. Add to these, fine roads, fine trees, and fine children (not, it is true, our exclusive, but our conspicuous property,) the dashing style and complete equipment of our stage coaches, and, above all, the dressed, yet charmingly rural air of the country, discoloured, however, some-

* Usually in France concentrated in towns and villages.

times, by that ugly board that talks of steel traps, and man traps, and spring guns, and other deadly devices;—a very villanous feature, by which I remember being greatly offended when I journeyed once from Dover to London, after several years absence from England.

At Calais, the large heavy-looking houses, unnecessarily vast for their present appropriations; the exemplary neatness of the women; the clumsy overloaded diligence, its shabby tackle and dogged looking horses, and the huge jack-boots with post-boys in them, whose frosted heads bear witness to the absence of a powder-tax and the low price of tallow, form the fore-ground of the scene, which, with its unscraped, old fashioned (rather than antique) air, has some good Flemish colouring about it.

Calais does not lie like a picture under its cliffs as Dover does. Nor does one grow dizzy here, with thinking of samphire-gatherers,* or looking at crows and choughs dwindling to the size of beetles as they fly downwards; but it stirs up some fine historical recollections, and one of recent date that does immortal honour to its virtuous citizens. It stands alone in its indignant rejection

* King Lear.

of a revolutionary tribunal. None could be found willing to become members of the bloody league; and thus was it saved, by a fine feeling of repugnance to the exercise of unjust authority, from regeneration by fire and sword.

The jetty here is the beau walk, and the half dead, and more than half dirty passengers thrown out from the packet-boats, the chief source of amusement. We sneaked through a double file of noisy *commissionaires*, vociferating in our ears the respective merits of the Lion d'Or, l'Hotel Royal, l'Hotel Dessin, &c., to the last-named house of refuge, where we find ourselves very comfortably lodged. I recollect passing a few hours here three or four years ago, and thinking the place deplorable. To-day it has quite a smart air, thanks to the sun that lights it up into comparative gaiety.

30th.—Custom-house miseries—Mimi not well —a courier to engage,—in short, more than enough to keep us here to-day. Walked on the hot and solitary rampart, and looked at the surrounding country. All brown and swampy. The ramparts of a small French town usually present a melancholy aspect. A long terrace, dusty or grass-grown, sometimes both; no living object within reach of the eye, except, perhaps, a priest

meditating his breviary, or a loitering soldier hanging over the parapet. Dulness, without solitude; neither the movement of life, nor the freshness of the country.

July 1st.—Still looking from our pretty rez de chaussée on a garden of roses, with full leisure to count them leaf by leaf, while the rain falls softly, brightening every dusty spray into verdure. Poor little Mimi's cold worse; but as it is, I trust, only a cold,—("would you have it the plague?" D—— would say),—I hope that we shall be able to get forward in a day or two; for Calais, even with the appendix of the jetty, is very soon exhausted.

This hotel was once (as we are told,) a convent, and the garden has still a conventual air; but chapels and cells have given place to a theatre; pious orgies to nocturnal revels; anthems to cavatinas; and incarcerated virgins to the migrating natives of our "inviolate island," our peerless island, as we all piously believe it to be. And thus believing, how odd must it seem to foreigners that we should run away from it, crying out "there is nothing like England—nothing like home. But I go for my children's education—I do it as a duty," &c.; or sifting Shakspeare for appliances,—"Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits," and so on; while the true reason

(nine times in ten) lies hid at the bottom of the heart, whispering in a half-starved voice, "economy," or love of change, or perhaps the anticipated pleasure of eclipsing home-loving folks, who "sit by the fire, and presume to know what's done i' the Capitol."

Sunday.—The bells rang at a very early hour this morning, as we supposed for prayers, but learned that it was to call the players to rehearsal. This species of Sabbath recreation is wholly repugnant to our feelings. The sacredness of the day seems to us to call for a calmer, a less excited state of mind, than that which we usually carry with us to a theatre. Tell a Frenchman so, and he will ask you in return if time is not as well employed in tranquilly looking on at the performance of a play (perhaps a very moral one,) as in a public-house, or even in the more refined exhibition of the Park, or Kensington Gardens.

The full tide of Calais existence was rushing through the fields and roads, when we strolled out this evening. And very fresh, and very gay the women looked, all sparkling with the spirit of rustic coquetry, and the consciousness of self and its claims. None were pretty, but all appeared to possess that quick susceptibility of enjoyment which finds a banquet in the summer air, and a

fulness of delight in mere existence. Even the old seemed animated by the spirit of decent gaiety, which so respectably distinguishes the humblest convivial meeting in this country. It was *jour de fête*, and we heard of dancing, and fire-works, and illuminations that were to be somewhere; but in what quarter that *somewhere* was we could not discover. We inquired of a smart looking girl, with a luxury of pink ribbon about her; but a saucy "partout," and a laugh at our ignorance, was the only answer. So we returned uninformed along the lonely rampart, preceded by a troop of sturdy youngsters, dancing their grotesque *fricassée* * almost under our feet. They were the only signs of life in the long arid perspective, except an old woman rolled up in a dark mantle and a nun's hood, gliding with an air of mystery into one of the garden-houses, as if bent on some mission of love or devotion, though probably a washer-woman, or a sempstress.

5th.—Cocked hats, wooden shoes, and sentimental beggars are all, alas! worn-out topics; piece them out how we may with frogs, vines, and *soupe maigre*, it is but a thread-bare patchwork after all, of which even Sterne, that most inge-

* A dance of the people.

nious weaver of cobweb, could now make nothing. An itinerant of the present day is driven to the necessity of saying briefly,—"Left Calais on the 5th:" a prosaic alternative, which may be varied into—"On the 5th we quitted Calais." Before our departure, L—— went into a shop, and while making a trifling purchase, entered into conversation with the master, who commented facetiously on the mistakes by which the English beginners in French grammar signalize themselves; à propos to which, he told a story, new to me, though perhaps a "Joe Miller." An Englishman travelling *en diligence*, was overturned into a ditch. "Avez-vous du mal, Monsieur?" inquired the conductor. "Non, je n'ai qu'un portemanteau," was the answer. This was not quite so good as the Baron de Souza's trail, but might pass as a pendant to Sir ——'s beautifully literal rebuke to the drunken man who annoyed him in the Palais Royal. "Monsieur," (said that eminent linguist), "tenez votre langue, vous êtes en liqueur." The story does not tell how the advice was taken.

The country, on leaving Calais, is flat, cold, and colourless; fertile in willows and other swampy indications, but not without the usual redeeming feature of the worst French scenery—stretches of wood breaking the naked distances.

It is, however, decidedly an ugly country. We drive on—think of the Kentish vales, and chuckle. Towards St. Omer, its raw aspect improves into agreeableness. The town is gloomy, though overflowing with foot and dragoons, pipes and mustachios every where; but the sombre air of a collegiate town still paramount. Yet to me this dull place has a peculiar interest, for here the dearest friend of my early life passed the years of his youth. The streets and walks which he had so often traversed, seemed to me familiar objects. I thought of what he must have been, in the early glow of conscious talent and its indulged illusions, ere disappointed hope had blended its sad shadows with the cold realities of after-life; and thus thinking, passed through the holy city of St. Omer, chief nursery of priests and nucleus of piety, which seems to have nothing attractive about it, but the shades of its Boulevards. Distance is oddly computed in this country. As we drove along, L—— asked how far it was to Cassel. "Monsieur, vous êtes arrivé," was the answer. We continued our course for at least half an hour without appearing to be nearer to it, and then repeated our inquiry:—"C'est à deux pas," said the post-boy, and the "deux pas" lasted a quarter of an hour longer, with a stiff hill into the bargain.

This is the land of merry beggars. A jovial crew of idle urchins run at our wheels, whining and yelling, and shouting out their *miseries* until their feet fail them; and then another troop start off with the same nasal twang, bleached hair, and bronzed faces, and the same glib list of maladies. Some express their wants by two distinct whines uttered at stated intervals, while others invoke us by the Holy Virgin, the Blessed Mother, the Queen of Heaven; then suddenly catching up a gayer strain, shout in chorus a verse or two of the old French song, "Qu'on m'apporte six cents bouteilles," &c.; while one stout lad, with a very white shirt, velvet waistcoat, and cheeks like full blown peonies, howls in a tone that smothers the querulous trebles of his companions, "Ma bonne dame, ayez pitié d'un pauvre miserable," repeating the last word while his breath holds.

Very fresh and agreeable to Cassel—woods and enclosures, and the town presenting itself strikingly, crowning the wooded heights, and looking over a view of great extent and considerable beauty. The scene was full of amenity, and as we wound slowly round the ascent, breathing an air embalmed with the perfume of bean blossoms, and new-mown hay with which the peasants were busily loading their carts, and gazing on an

exquisite sun-set, kindling every leaf and bud into life and brightness, I felt how quickly the mind catches its hue from the aspect of nature. It was a charming picture, touched with that full colouring of graceful hilarity with which we usually associate the idea of rustic scenes in France, a perfect cure for blue devils. Nervous people talk of quinine and cascarilla, but they are ditch water to hay fields and sunshine.

6th.—Saw the same view from the show-point of the Cassel cicerone, but the white glare of a blazing sun spoiled all. This crying out against the sun, seems like a contradiction to what I have just been saying; but one is not obliged to love *all* kinds of sunshine, no more than one is to admire all kinds of eyes; the orb may still be beautiful, but we have a fancy for certain lights and colours. Our guide grew rapturous as he dwelt on the thirty-two towns which would have been visible (distinctly visible, he averred) if the aforesaid sun had not put them out, and on the wonderful circumstance of being able to take in at one glance a portion of the dominions of three powerful sovereigns. We did not at first exactly comprehend how this was brought about. Belgium, it was true, lay on one side, and France stretched itself out on the other, but part the third was still

wanting. We never even thought of Dover Castle, the spires of Calais being absolutely invisible; yet so it was. We were obliged, however, to take the showman's word for the land of promise, not having, like that sweet visionary Tilburina, the gift of seeing things not in sight.

We talk of Italy, but the sun can be, and was this morning, as hot in the north of France as at Pisa, (a red-hot place, by the bye). However, we all cried out, "What does it signify?" and when one has said so in a decided tone, it is astonishing how bold the heart grows. So, trusting ourselves to the mercy of our conductor, we drawled along to the gardens of General Vandamme: the finest gardens in the world, he said, and gravely told us that strangers came from Petersburgh, and I believe from Moscow, expressly to see them. We naturally expected something as beautiful as the Peri's Paradise, or the glittering bowers of Aladdin's Fairy Land, and were, of course, disappointed. Yet the elements of rural beauty are there: wooded slopes, gay openings, verdure, shade, and flowers; but the directing taste is bad. Flaming scarlet flower-pots decorate the lawn, and other unmeaning, or worse than unmeaning redundancies force themselves into view, contrary to all rural and picturesque feeling. Still, on the whole, there

is more of nature than is usually visible in continental gardening; more that approaches to *scenery* than the most symmetrically arranged parallelograms, hexagons, and angles, acute or obtuse, can ever do, though squared and pointed according to the unerring rules of geometry. The house would be Italian, but for its Flemish coat of red and white wash. We did not see it; I think it was not on show.

A professed epicure may sup fearlessly at the Poste Royale. The *chef*, if not a legitimate *cordon bleu*, is at least a most meritorious artist. I regret that I cannot extend my eulogium to the females, who crowd the market-place under our windows; but they are so incorrigibly ugly, that with all the facilities of my nature, I can do nothing for them. As a compensation, the horses are fine, and the environs charming. Red roses and white lilies are as abundant in the cottage gardens as peas and beans, and as every cottage has its garden, the country is all bloom.

They have a fancy here for filling up their cemeteries with an array of triangular tablets, painted black; a dismal memento, neither dignified nor affecting. A yew-tree, or a cypress, is at once poetical and monumental; and flowers are full of sweet and gentle associations, and of moral ones

too. Emblems of life and shadowings of futurity, they bud, expand, fade, die, and then shoot out again into fresh strength and beauty,—thus discoursing silently with the heart, and teaching it to hope in the midst of its heaviness. Alas! it wants this comfort. It would be sad to look upon the early daisies covering the grave of the young, the loved, the innocent, and to think that while every returning season awakens a fresh nature, and dresses the withered stalk with a careless profusion of blossoms, there should be no second spring—no renovation in the tomb! The bursting flowers teach us the lesson of hope; but an army of black boards, planted in thick companionship, means nothing, and looks like an assembly of gouls, holding their unnatural and deadly revels.

Rattled away from Cassel over a paved road, sadly against pastoral beauty; but there was no help for it—so we blessed M'Adam, and jumbled on. Unrural villages, but not without pretension to finery—walls daubed with yellow wash—shutters panelled white and green, and roofs covered with glittering tiles that make the eyes ache. Left Bailleul, a town of some size and no interest, behind us, and passed on through a very monotonous country,—too many willows. The worst thing in the shape of a tree is a pollard-willow—neither

shade nor verdure. Yet Cuyp and Ostade, and Paul Potter, have done great things with it.

Very ugly about Armentiers (another green and yellow town), and very uninteresting to Lille, but the women improve. Some looked rather pretty, in the modest head-dress of Raphael's virgins, and often without shoes or stockings. I have noted down this deficiency, as if it added to their charms, which it certainly does not. Lille is an old gloomy-looking strong hold, planted in a dismal country. We were told of a beautiful walk on the Boulevards; but the heat was awful, so we did not verify.

Tournay has a more agreeable aspect, and some reputation, I believe, as a handsome town. The Scheldt creeps through it as slothfully as if it called itself canal. It was literally choked up with lumbering vessels of a singularly clumsy shape, but suited, I suppose, to the slow navigation of a sleepy Flemish river. The custom-house familiars attacked us here, but were satisfied with a peep into our imperials, without pressing a scrutiny. This was our third encounter to-day with the armed authorities. The barriers are another Flemish nuisance; they are as frequent, and I believe as expensive, as our turnpikes.

Slept at Arth (or Ath,) a small place, strongly

fortified. What we have seen of the Netherlands is certainly uninteresting—nothing to affect the imagination, and not much to please the eye. The people get drunk with beer, and are, as far as we can judge from our casual contact with inn-keepers, post-boys, and other highway accommodations, somewhat boorish; but we are to have better things by and by.

7th.—The road full of little swells; our post-boys took them drawlingly, while we prayed for air, which a more rapid movement would have given us; but it would have been downright cruelty to have urged the horses to their speed, under a sky that glowed like heated metal. For the last three days the heat has been all but insupportable—a true Italian atmosphere, and rendered doubly oppressive by the glare of white-wash with which not only the houses, but the garden walls are covered. The mellow tinting of dear dirty Italy helps a little to blunt the effect of its sunbeams; but here every thing is scraped and brightened into a blaze of, at least, outward splendour, extremely distressing to the sight, and certainly not favourable to the scenery. Enghien was quite dazzling, but we looked with delight on its green and shady vicinity, and wished its leafy luxuries had lasted longer. Not a breath of air

stirred the heavy fields of grain, that swelled up on each side of the road, and we had soon to sigh (as we have often done within the last day or two) for the double row of trees, which cast their pleasant shade over the highways in France. However, the country from Enghien is the most pleasing that we have seen since Cassel.

Passed through Hal rapidly, but caught a glance of a life-sized figure of our Saviour, crowned with thorns, niched into the wall of the cathedral, with a striped silk petticoat tied round the throat; a dozen necklaces, and a Calvary painted in the back ground. These perhaps well-intentioned, but certainly ill-judged, exhibitions are not frequent here.

CHAPTER II.

BRUSSELS — NAMUR — VALLEY OF THE MEUSE — HUY TO LIEGE.

EMERGING from the steep, narrow, and somewhat tortuous streets by which the Place Royale at Brussels is approached, and coming at once upon the handsome square, the Rue Royale, the verdant alleys of the Parc, and all its right royal formalities, we thought the general effect very striking. All or nearly all the fine things in Brussels are comprised in this coup d'œil. The Parc is much inferior to the garden of the Tuileries (always unrivalled in the stiff, full-dressed way); but abounds in shade, and appears to be the grand Sunday promenade from twelve till two in the afternoon. At other hours, and on week-days, it seems utterly deserted. This may be owing to a temporary caprice of fashion, or the dulness of the moment, for we are now in the dead season; the streets are empty—the beau monde absent—the

court at the Hague, and all the "strut, fringe, and whisker" of a capital vanished with it. Went to the little theatre in the Parc last night, and saw three or four light pieces agreeably acted. The principal one was manufactured from Mrs. Inchbald's Simple Story. Lord Elmwood, while yet a priest, flourished in a fashionable drab-coloured carrick, and Lord Frederick, an "observed" of the first water, looked and was equipped like the master of a *treckschnyt*. But the heroine (I have forgotten her name) was interesting, and rather pretty.

I cannot understand Brussels—its narrow dark streets have all the same character. I do not speak of the Rue Royale, and others adjacent to the Parc, which are handsome and regular; but of what may be called the downright town of Brussels, to which this upper region is an airy appendage. The Rue Montagne de la Cour is showy in the shop way, and is handsomely terminated by the church of St. Jean, whose façade seems to close it, though in fact the Place Royale intervenes; but the most original thing here is the Grande Place, which, all dirty and ruinous, and degraded by mean shops as it is, is still very striking. The Hotel de Ville has a strong character of Gothic gloom, and even grandeur, notwithstanding the four stories in the

roof, and a tower on one side which ought to have been in the middle; and the whole square has a barbaric colouring about it, that amuses the imagination; it looks like what we should fancy a bazaar at Tunis, or the vast interior court of an Alhambra, fallen into villanous uses. As to the Allée Verte, it does not merit to be talked of. It is little more than a straight road on the bank of a canal, planted with rows of trees, dividing it into a carriage-drive, with parallel alleys for pedestrians. It did, I suppose, afford shade when its trees had leaves; at present the caterpillars have eaten up the foliage, and many exhibit nothing but the bare branches. In short, it is very little better than any one of the avenue-like roads that lead into Paris. Yet people ask,—"Have you seen the Allée Verte?" and grow elaborate and poetical, as if they were talking of the Chiaja, or l'Enghé, or the Cascine, or Kensington Gardens. The Boulevards, too recently planted to be beautiful, will in good time be a great acquisition to the inhabitants of Brussels, and already form an agreeable drive.

I hate church and palace-hunting, unless it be to see something really worth looking at; but what can one do? Yesterday evening we drove to Schonenberg, a summer residence of the king's,

half a league from the capital; and toiled through a suite of half-furnished apartments, still exhibiting some tarnished remains of the finery which Napoleon had left behind him. But not a picture, (O yes! a portrait of the King of Prussia, and a duet of stiff German princesses); not a bronze—not a marble. Plaster casts of the Prince and Princess of Orange, and impressions of the same on satin, taking rank as works of art, with the performances of a school girl in a provincial convent. Against the walls of a small chamber were suspended three or four wreaths of withered field flowers—dim violets—once "sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes;" but now probably preserved for the sake of some innocent recollection, which has outlived their beauty. They were flowers gathered in the fields by the Princess Marianne, only daughter of the king, and which the servants had orders not to displace during her absence. Of this Flemish Proserpine the attendants spoke with rapture. So kind—so affable—and so benevolent: a thing for the tongue to bless, and the heart to cherish.

Schonenberg, though not worth seeing as a show-place, is a very pleasant country residence. The gardens have a modest proportion of royal embellishments: a grotto—a cascade (the waters under lock and key, and only thrown off on state

occasions)—a temple dedicated to Minerva, which has a pretty effect through the trees, and an air of cheerfulness that does not belong inevitably to royal demesnes.

The good people of Brussels seem to be active consumers of malt. Every *guinguette* on our road homewards had its fair proportion of plodding beer-drinkers, amóng whom were many respectable looking persons of both sexes. But the joyous burst that rends the air, as a Parisian "rendez-vous des bons amis" is approached, has no parallel in the chastised festivities of a Flemish ale-house.

The exterior of the church of St. Gudule is good, and would be better if it was not encumbered by shabby-looking houses, that cling to it as if they were part of itself. We were too late at four in the afternoon to see the interior. The fashion here is to shut up the churches after twelve at noon, a churlish custom rare in Catholic countries, where the temple of the Most High is never closed but in the dead hour of night; where the knee may always bend in worship, or the heart venture its prayer and offer up its thanksgiving, unimpeded by bolt, or chain, or cicerone.

The French seem to be regretted here; increased taxes under the present government is the alleged reason. The ladies affect the French toilette very

successfully, but the display of beauty is deplorably meagre. "C'est par la dentelle que les dames cherchent à se distinguer," said one of those ambulating dealers who infest the inns to me this morning. It was a distinction on which a legitimate beauty, or even a pretender, whose claims were very debatable, would not in England have particularly piqued herself.

There are two casts of female heads common here; the broad Flemish, and the dark, sharp, Jewish outline. Neither are, generally speaking, well filled up. I have seen no Esthers, nor even an Helena Foreman. When Rubens gave us ale-wives for Venuses, he found his models in the common nature that surrounded him. Of the drawing-room nature I can say nothing, not having had an opportunity of seeing any specimens of patrician beauty. The grisettes wear a scarf of very rich black silk, thrown over the head, and confined in front by the hand, after the Venetian fashion. It is singularly pretty and becoming to the young, and gives to the old women a picturesque religious air, that effaces the vulgarity of the ordinary cornette, or coloured handkerchief.

Nothing can be more tasteless and shabby than the equipages which at present parade the Boulevards: in the season of gaiety they are of course

more brilliant. On the other hand, the public carriages are the best I have seen any where—very neat, indeed smart calèches may be hired on the stands, either by the hour or distance, on very moderate terms—two francs the hour, I think we were told. There are two theatres here, at which performances take place alternately. In the winter season, balls of the most brilliant description are frequent, and Brussels is transformed into a second Paris. At present it is the dullest looking place (considered in its quality of a capital) that I have almost ever seen. The stuccoed houses, tinged with every shade of which blue, pale green, yellow, and white are susceptible, have frequently small mirrors projecting from the windows, in which the living current is reflected as it pours through the street. Brussels is considered a cheap place. It is difficult for a stranger, staying at a modish hotel, to ascertain this point exactly; but as far as we can judge, it appears to be much less expensive than Paris, and perhaps more so than the general run of large towns in Italy.

July 12.—Visited the interior of St. Gudule,* delaying our departure a few hours for that purpose. It is handsome, though a good deal disfi-

* Commonly called the cathedral.

gured by its coat of whitewash, and has some talked-of statues by Quesnoy, and a pulpit of oak, most elaborately carved—a curiously beautiful thing in its way. The figures are expressive, and the form of the whole graceful. Virgins in brocaded petticoats, and bambinos crowned with flowers, are as thickly niched here as in Italy itself. From thence we drove to the church of Notre Dame de la Chapelle, where the tomb of Breughel was pointed out to us, and another carved pulpit in the same style as that which we had already seen, but not so fine.

While we strolled about the aisles of the cathedral, I was struck with an instance which presented itself of the variety of tastes and fancies to which the chequer-work of life owes so much of its pleasant diversity. An English lady, with her bonnet in her hand and a full crop of ringlets, stood before the iron screen which encloses, I think, the high altar, in fixed but not mute admiration. Neither pulpit, statue, nor picture, seemed to hold any power over her attention; the iron work was the thing.—"C'est tout fer frappé!" she exclaimed, in a tone of concentrated delight; and calling back her companions, who seemed to enter coldly into her feelings, repeated "Tout fer frappé!—comme c'est beau!" and then she pointed out the

rosettes and the leaves, and dwelt on the sharp details and delicate tracery, as though the object of her raptures had been a Raphael or a Domenichino. Thinks I to myself—"Vous êtes orfèvre, Monsieur Josse." But whether heiress to an iron mine, or wife, widow, or daughter of an ironmonger, I have yet to learn.

Church-gazing at Brussels is poor work after Italy, and so is picture-hunting. The Museum has some hundred yards of canvass sanctified by great names, but nothing of eminent attraction, and the churches (all museums of art in Italy) put forth here most wretchedly.

We found a pleasing English-looking country on leaving Brussels; but the forest of Soignés, through which the road runs for several miles, soon shuts it out. Lord Byron supposes this to be the identical Ardennes of the banished Duke. On what he grounds his conjecture, I know not, but the idea helps out the scenery wonderfully. It is pleasant to people the forest solitudes with the bright creations of the mighty master, and to fancy the soft forms of the gentle Rosalind and her sweet coz wandering amidst its wild recesses; or the love-sick Orlando and the melancholy Jaques, stretched beneath the lavish shade of the old greenwood-tree, musing over the illusions

of love, or moralizing on the weaknesses of humanity.

The straggling village of Waterloo, appearing in the midst of fields which seem snatched from the heart of the forest, gives, in its quiet rusticity, no sign of the fierce and fiery deeds of which it was once the theatre. In the village church are many simple memorials, erected by surviving affection or respect, to the memory of those who fell on the dreadful 18th of June, and the preceding engagement. Their honoured names need no gorgeous record—they are written, and written for ever, on a great page of history.

The field of Waterloo!—what an eternity of recollections hang upon it. The guides cry out, —"There stood the Duke—there dropped Picton—here the German legion was cut to pieces.—Look onwards: there was Napoleon's position—by that route he fled!" The scene comes forth in all its terrible reality—it spreads itself out like a wild phantasmagoria; shouts and death-groans "hurtle" in the heavens—they rend the air—they embarrass the echoes. But the guides soon destroy the illusion. "Achetez des boutons, Madame; button of English guard. — Voilà l'aigle de Napoléon.—Buy one bullet, grape-shot, French trompette; achetez, Madame.—Quelque chose de

plus, Monsieur, pour les guides, nous sommes si pauvres." We found that there was no possibility of shaking off our tormentors, whom we had already paid three times over, but by pushing vigorously on. One, the most importunate of half a dozen, still ran by the side of the carriage, crying out while his breath held, "Position Napoléon. — Belle Alliance:—boulet de canon in de valls—look, Ma'am—voyez, Madame." At last we tired out our persecutors, just as a grey drizzling rain came on, covering the plains of Waterloo with a shroud, in melancholy keeping with the unidentified graves, and the wide, still field of battle. So is not a huge mound of earth heaped up to commemorate a wound received by the Prince of Orange, and which is to be surmounted by the Belgic lion! There is bad taste in thus seeking to glorify *one* particular wound, amidst so many instances of devotedness even to death. The great mass of earth too, obstructing the view, and changing the face of the field, is an ill-imagined excrescence.

We found comfortable beds at Jenappe, at the Hôtel du Roi d'Espagne, or, as it is *done into English*, on a card over the chimney, *An inn from the Spanish king*. One post-boy to four horses is the mode in Flanders, or, at least, com-

menced with us at Brussels, where we had rope harness, beautified into white by a coating of pipe-clay; a piece of Flemish foppery new to me. The women here wear the odious skull-cap of coloured cotton, common at Brussels; but even this deplorable coiffure can add nothing to their natural deformity. Stopped for a moment at Quatre Bras, *three leg*, as our guide at Waterloo called it; a version to which one of our travelling wags had probably helped him.

From Jenappe to Namur, a cultivated and not unpleasing country, full of gentle swells. The cottages are solidly built, have generally gardens, and all possess the luxury of glazed windows, but they are raw and uninviting. Approaching Namur, soft outlines and wooded hills vary the landscape agreeably. The town itself, with its prominent fortifications, looked stony; we saw but little of the interior; only some narrow streets, and a square, or place, without any distinctive character; perhaps there is nothing more to be seen. It has the usual Netherland feature;—a redundancy of officers spread out before the doors of the coffee-houses, smoking and lounging away their superfluous hours, and casting ruinous glances on the hard-featured country girls as they stand trafficking at the market stalls, and who (be it whispered) are

here, as in other parts of the Netherlands, much more ill-favoured than the men of the same class.

The Sambre and the Meuse perform their confluence here. We crossed both rivers on leaving Namur, one within the town, and the other on the outside. Both have good points about them: the first, with the old balconies full of flowers hanging over it, and the fortified bank mounting rapidly upwards, has something of original character. But what a sweet thing is the valley of the Meuse from Namur to Huy; what a delicious blending of woods and rocks, fields and habitation, of bold yet graceful scenery! The chateaus are all in the French style, some with pointed roofs, others with pigeon-house turrets, but in nothing consonant with the romantic aspect of the country. French chateaus are decidedly bad things,—stiff, unwieldy, and without any pretensions to architectural beauty, or even to that of irregularity, the next best thing to perfect symmetry, and a much better thing (generally speaking), as connected with picturesque effect. Exact and corresponding proportions give a noble and beautiful appearance to a building of vast dimensions and high appropriation, and the uniform aspect of parallel wings, a roof evenly sloped, and walls equally tinted, create ideas of order, sufficiency, and quiet, which harmonize well

with peaceful agricultural scenery, or the sober monotony of a wide level. But projecting and retreating lines, time-stains, the gallery added, or the chamber thrown out, as increased means or numbers make such ekings-out luxurious or convenient, are much quicker helps to the imagination.

At Ardennes the valley widens, and the landscape becomes less striking. It is a pleasant garden country, but still with rocks and woods enough to hang reveries upon. Some peasant girls were employing themselves very unromantically in moistening coal-dust into a paste, and then making balls of it. One of these sooty nymphs was more than pretty, though her features bore evident marks of her dingy occupation.

Huy sits charmingly on the Meuse, and shows off its vast cathedral, staring fortress, terraced gardens, rocks, steeples, and convents, very effectively. The inn was so tempting, that we were half disposed to stay the night there, but we passed on,—as travellers must do who have not a whole life to throw away on *'tis buts*,—'tis but an hour—'tis but a day,—and so pass days and hours, till the amount swallows up existence.

This same Huy has (as guide-books tell us) sixteen churches and eighteen convents. Our hostess confessed to seventeen convents, but said that many

of the churches had been demolished. This centre of holiness appears scarcely larger than a spacious village. The cheerful air of its charming environs, warmed as they now are by a bright sun, must contrast mournfully with the narrow cells and cold cloisters in which the army of martyrs (including, of course, in its ranks the young and the pretty) fast, and pray, and pine away existence. Were I a nun, and could choose my convent, I would have it in the heart of black beetling rocks, detached from the world beneath and shut out from the heavens above by interminable pine forests. I would have but a peep of nature, and that in her least changeable form. But to look through barred windows at a rushing river and blue skies!—to watch the summer clouds as they float over the habitations of man,—to hear the free lark sing as it soars upwards—poor souls!—it is too much even for Westphalian phlegm.

The look back on Huy, its smiling hills and gracefully curved river, is quite beautiful. Here, and for the first time since we commenced our journey, we have found vineyards; hops too are cultivated, but they are a common feature in Flemish scenery. I know not how much we may owe to an evening that seemed made for us, but the whole drive is delightful. The setting sun shines

brightly on a long, smooth, and very green meadow that spreads out its soft carpet temptingly on the brink of the river;—it is a perfect Cuyp—the row of pollard willows, the broken bank, the ruminating cattle. The Meuse is here broader and more rapid than in the valley of Namur; and the landscape, though not of so romantic a character, is in the freshest spirit of country scenery. A little gunpowder judiciously applied to a few of the flaring red, red houses that stare at one every where, and put out the eyes with their effrontery of brick-dust, would be a benediction. Sometimes a castellated dwelling, perched feudally upon the summit of a rock, affects dignity, and awakens reminiscences of better things. But, in general, the rural mansions in this liveable, loveable country, are in the worst possible taste. Yet such as they are, we agreed that we should have no objection to inhabiting one of them in the summer months, for the sake of its charming belongings. Amazing condescension! Could the proprietors (probably not a little vain of their showy tenements) be aware of our gracious dispositions, how they would be edified!

Towards Liege the country declines in beauty, and red houses multiply. We lose the Meuse, or have it shorn of half its loveliness. Goîtres of no

small size too often distend the throats of the females; they are not otherwise ill-looking, and wear the hair divided smoothly from the forehead into two long ringlets, which are put behind the ears, and hang upon the neck rather becomingly. The rest of the dress is negligent, and often dirty. In the villages, every second or third house hangs out its invitation to the thirsty traveller. Sometimes, in a hamlet of small size, I have counted four or five cabarets adjoining each other. The *ale-house*—with us an unerring direction—would here signify nothing.

CHAPTER III.

LIEGE — SPA — AIX-LA-CHAPELLE — COLOGNE TO GOTTISBERG.

TWILIGHT, with its thousand shadows, had dropped upon the town of Liege before we reached it. We could distinguish nothing of the general effect, and but little even of the details which were brought more immediately under the eye; but we seemed to pass along a broad quay, lined with mean houses, apparently inhabited by the lower class of people, mixed with a few of better bearing, and planted in one part with trees, whose formal lines and regular openings indicated a promenade. The opposite bank of the river seemed a confusion of churches, houses, trees, and pavilions. As we advanced, gardens with dressy-looking dwellings in them, spread out their respectabilities along the quay; crowds passed and repassed. I never saw, even at Paris, such a tide of pedestrians. At length we turned into a spacious square; still the

same movement; stopped at an hotel—not a hole vacant; drove up some narrow gloomy streets to another—"bien fâché, mais—"; then again through more narrow streets, the carriage almost touching the walls, to a third, where we at last housed ourselves. Every door was encircled by loungers —every coffee-room overflowing. We concluded that it was either feast or fair, and were surprised to find that it was nothing more than common. Liege was always in a bustle while the summer lasted. "Toujours le même monde—le même mouvement," said our informer. Why it should be so we cannot discover, for there does not appear to be any point of attraction. It was necessary to have the carriage washed this morning. A woman presented herself as the operator, and performed to admiration;—it was, she said, her profession. Here, as in France, the softer sex seem active members of society, and frequently take upon themselves executive branches, which are considered in England as out of their legitimate sphere.

I do not know whether my twilight sketch is at all like the real Liege; for the windows of our apartment looking on a close court, afford no opportunity of judging. 14th. Nor has the peep we have had this morning at all advanced matters. The lanes, by courtesy called streets, through

which we passed on quitting the town, looked old and gloomy; the lower class of people abominably dirty, particularly the children; the bridges old; the houses old; every thing old but the students, who, in the negligé of a carter's frock, or the demi-toilette of a great coat and *casquette*, lounged about, bestowing their tediousness on the too credulous grisettes, or sitting before the shop-doors, peeping through an atmosphere of tobacco, in the full equipage of laziness. We did not, it is true, see the cathedral, nor any of the innumerable churches, nor the bright side of the town—if it has one. But we saw enough to know, that the episcopal city of Liege is no longer what it was on that memorable day, when Quentin Durward sallied forth to take admiring note of its stately edifices, its splendid marts, and general gorgeousness. There is, however, much that is good when one gets out of its dirty precincts. The hilly environs, thickly dotted with country houses, appear full of agreeable sites, gay slopes, and woody recesses. We mounted for some time through a country of cherry orchards; and not far from Liege passed a spa, which is said to be of equal efficacy with the renowned Pohun. It is called, I think, Chauxfontaine, and though a very new looking thing, has already its *Vauxhall d' Eté*,

and other watering-place components. I say *already* at random, for Louis de Bourbon, or William de la Marck, may have quaffed of its springs for aught I know.

The valley from Liege to Spa, though greatly inferior to the delicious valley of the Meuse, is very pleasing. The devious course of the stream which flows through it, and the winding of the road, relieve the fatiguing monotony of confined scenery—such as a gentle vale of unaspiring pretensions usually presents; and towards Spa the rocks and woods, fresh fields, and abundant streams, have a pastoral colouring, a still and sequestered air, that whispers wooingly to the fancy.

The country look of Spa, its dimensions not exceeding those of a large village, its quiet, even solitary streets, surprised me. I expected to have seen something at least of the idle parade, the effort of our watering-places;—not a symptom—nothing beyond the tranquillity of a small country town. The wooded hills shouldering the houses and peeping in at every street, the rustic air of the people, the unpolished trim and dialect of the attendants at the hotels, the paucity of shops and their meanness, all combine to present the idea rather of a newly discovered spring, of un-

acknowledged virtue, than of the Spa of Spas, where beauties have exercised their charms, and swindlers their arts, till its fame has become European. It is now a small town of hotels and lodging-houses; some of the former are spacious and well arranged; the Redoute has a fine ball-room, and the usual facilities for play, but very little use seems now to be made of it for any thing.

A ball was announced for last night, and a posse of mustachios from Liege and the adjacent garrisons appeared to sustain its honours. L—— looked in—not a lady visible—not even a female of any description. At ten o'clock, the officers (foiled in their gallant intentions) turned to the roulette tables, and thus ended this abortive attempt at gaiety. We are told that the balls have failed, because the English ladies refuse to dance with the German officers, unless the latter have been particularly presented to them. The prevailing mode is here the same as in France where an introduction is not deemed necessary, the lady not being supposed to consider her cavalier as an acquaintance, nor does he presume to approach her as such.

We were given a reason just now for the apparent stillness of the Spa of to-day, contrasted

with the brilliant reputation of the old German Spa of other times, which may, perhaps, hold good to a certain extent. Formerly there was but one promenade, where the visitors were all concentrated. Ten minutes after the arrival of a stranger, he was certain to meet (if he wished it) the whole population, and probably to recognise friends or acquaintances. Now there are walks east, west, north, and south, without any decided point of union; and people are scattered about as they are in the five or six, or perhaps more, continuous saloons of a Paris hotel, where two or three hundred persons, who would make a brilliant appearance in the two communicating drawing-rooms and supplementary boudoir of a fair-sized London house, seem like landmarks in a desert.

Yesterday we visited the springs. The Geronstère, half a league from Spa, is charmingly situated; we strolled about the wild wood walks, and enjoyed its buzzing quiet—nothing alive but butterflies and bees, whose drowsy hum made stillness yet more still; giving just that sense of sound which forces on the mind the consciousness of profound silence, interrupted only by its murmur. The nymph of the fount praised not only the healthful, but palatable qualities of the water; called it "la bierre du pays," preferred it to the

"bierre de Mars," and added, that the peasants, when they went to their labour in the field, filled their pitchers at the spring, and required no other restorative, after a day of exertion, than this simple beverage. "Blest swains of Arcady!" innocent Corydons! who still consider water, and that too none of the purest, as the chief luxury, the hock or sherbet of their frugal repasts. But this water is the universal panacea, possessing all the "interesting attributes" ascribed by the illustrious Farina to his Eau de Cologne; it is at once "salutaire, animante, et fortifiante." An old woman, who stood by, vouched also for its purity and sanative qualities, which were so powerful, she said, as to make all such things as cordials quite unnecessary. Hot cognac, and hotter kirchwasser, were things unknown (according to her account) in the innocent shades of the Geronstère; a bright cherry red hue on the tip of the nose, and a streak of blackish purple on each cheek, inclined us rather to question her authority. We tasted this ambrosia of sulphur and iron, and praised Bacchus, but with due decency, glorifying more loudly the dimpled brook whose pure waters are never sullied by the foul blue and yellow scum, with its ugly bilious associations.

Another spring, the Sauvenière, has an agree-

able walk and some good trees about it, but is much inferior to the Geronstère in rural beauty. The Tonnelet is still less attractive, but there was a child! a girl of eight or nine years old, sitting by the road-side in rags, but so beautiful! with an expression in her eye of vague melancholy—of premature thought—never traced in childhood on the happy faces of the rich and cherished. As she sat looking at us mournfully, I thought of Wordsworth's solitary reaper, and of a hundred other bright wild things, of which she in her neglected loneliness seemed the type.

There is a character of solitude, without gloom, in the country about Spa, which greatly takes my fancy. It is a panorama of wooded hills, of wild and irregular form, looking down into deep and solitary dells, or folding line over line, and shutting in little scenes of simple beauty that awaken feelings of quiet enjoyment, and reconcile the lovers of nature, by their unshorn sweetness, to the absence of her more majestic forms.

We are told of the sublime scenery of the Cascade de Coo, and the romantic beauty of Mon Jardin; but probably shall not be able to visit either. An accident which happened to my foot yesterday has laid an embargo on our projected rambles, and sent me to my bed, from which I

can contemplate at leisure the roof of the opposite house, and a group of tailors at work in a garret window. I wish I was not obliged to hear them also, howling in chorus, and always the same dirge, with an utter defiance of time and tune, and a spirit of perseverance absolutely overwhelming.

18th.—Still detained at Spa, where we conjugate the verb "*s'ennuyer*," through all its tenses. O! that the travelling part of the community were exempt from sprains and fevers. At home we have time to nurse them, and beds and slops made after our own fashion, and all the little condiments of happiness which we call comforts. But in an inn—no matter; it will all be the same in a week hence, and after having cheerfully endured the sashless windows,—the bed, or rather bag of matted maize-leaves,—the rats, insects, leaden spoons, indescribable messes, and nasty hands that prepared them, of La Casa del Piano, and other Italian *osterie*, it seems like being very fine, or very feeble, to talk disparagingly of the comparative luxury of the Hôtel de *Yorck*, which (ill humour apart) is very comfortable. But anxious to linger a little amidst the unseen wonders of the Rhine, and to reach Switzerland before the changing season has chilled its beauties, we are cross at finding ourselves stopped short in a place which

has nothing to render it interesting to strangers but its pleasing environs, and they are, alas! a sealed book to the ill-starred pill-garlick who, willing or not, must keep one foot, at least, upon a cushion. But chances brighten,—black and blue already yield to green and yellow. Another day, and with the aid of a friendly arm and an easy carriage, I may perhaps see that old town of hot springs and emperors, Aix-la-Chapelle.

Meanwhile, I shall amuse myself with writing down the items of a day at Spa. A clatter of horses on the pavement, at a very early hour, seems to announce that kind of matinal gaiety and bustle common, I believe, to English watering-places. It is, however, only the blue-frocked gentry, parading their horses up and down the street, putting them through their paces to tempt the unprovided stranger, who may meditate a balmy canter to the Geronstère, or the Tonnelet. A little later, visitors who drink the waters are in movement, and at ten o'clock all has again relapsed into silence. What people do with themselves during the day I know not. Nobody is visible, but the evening again brings forth the few that are here, to linger on a dull straight promenade; a triple alley, with agreeable hills about it, where five or six carriages, perhaps not so many, and a

dozen or so of ladies, with half or a third of their number of beaus, scattered into parties of threes and fours, drawl about till dusk with a hopeless air of nothing-to-do-ishness. There may be private society; of this I have no means of judging; but as far as appearances may be considered symptomatic, nothing of the kind seems to exist. Perhaps a little tea-drinking, or a forced pic-nic, may now and then diffuse about as much gaiety over this ancient court of Comus, as belongs to Eastbourne, or Bognor rocks; or perhaps this may be a bad season, or we may be too late, or too early; for, after all, a flying visit of a few days to any place can teach one nothing but to mistrust one's own judgment.

L—— took Gertrude to the theatre last night; twelve persons in the boxes, and twenty-eight in the rest of the house. A French troop performing vaudevilles, as French actors (even the least distinguished) always do most agreeably, and the receipts scarcely enough to pay the fiddlers. What a sacrifice of smiles and flounces!—of mesdemoiselles Camille, Rosalie, Delphine, and other names of honied sound, to a sum total of three or four louis!

This evening dear Amy shows symptoms of a cold, attended with fever. There is nothing like

a real evil, as a cure for an imaginary one. I thought it dull work to be chained down here, but I am now most happy to be in a place of repose, and within reach of assistance.

22d.—This morning we again passed through part of the sweet valley we had already traversed in going from Liege to Spa, and then turned to the right into another less beautiful, but still pleasant, leaving behind us Verviers, and other manufacturing towns or villages of lesser note. Onward to Aix-la-Chapelle, the country is full of pleasant English features: cattle feeding in delicious meadows—hedges all in flower—soft vales and hilly distances. No country houses, or almost none, but Madonnas and crucifixes every where; goîtres as common as in the Vallais, and public-houses as numerous as the memorials of piety. By the by, this same pious spirit (if such it may be called) manifests itself oddly enough sometimes. St. Patrick spreads his mantle of holiness over half the ale-houses in Ireland, and generally guards the entrance in propriâ persona, mitre, crosier, and keys as fine as gold leaf can make them. To-day we remarked on the sign-board of a wine-house not far from Spa, the effigy of a dove poised over a drinking-glass, between a bottle and a tankard, and above, in smart letters, "Au Saint Esprit."

We have brought our invalid safely to Aix, and find her health improved by the little journey. This town has some movement about it, but the streets are steep and narrow. The great square, surrounded by irregular buildings, owes its air of consequence to its size; its huge bronze fountain, crowned with a stiff figure of Charlemagne, and furthermore decorated with two dolphins, each throwing up its thready jet d'eau to the fierce black eagle that sentinels the group; and above all, to the venerable Hôtel de Ville, which, notwithstanding the redundant spotting of windows in its exuberant roof, has that colouring of semi-barbarous darkness always good for picture. The surrounding houses are variously embellished; some with pilasters, others with a sprinkling of gold leaf on the balconies; and some have a double row of narrow windows running along the whole front of the house, and separated only by a thin stone pier; so that the rooms must be all window, and, consequently, would be all glare, but for the intervention of roller-blinds of thick paper with which the windows are furnished.—Can it be that the ladies of Aix are still ignorant of the beautifying influence of what the French expressively call the "demi jour?"

High mass this morning at the cathedral; went

rather late, and found the crowd much more disagreeable (garlick apart) than an Italian one. So many ugly forbidding faces, unredeemed by any of more pleasing character, at least that I could discover. In the church mobs of Italy, one is sometimes repaid for inhaling odours—certainly not of Arabia—by picturesque, and often charming figures; and frequently by kindness and courtesy. But here the ladies (awkward imitators of the French toilette) look as if they felt their dress, and derived pretensions from it, which, were they pretty, might be deemed more excusable. The French, and their copyists, push the influence of dress even further than Addison did; it is a claim, a title, a right to admiration seldom disputed; it is, in short, a part of one's self. A pretty woman is so mixed up with her rose-buds, her marabouts, the soft rustle of her silks, and the lustre of her diamonds; and a plain one so beautified by her settings off, that the real difference is scarcely felt. But woe betide the beauty who dares to transgress the laws of fashion. "Comme Madame de B—— est belle! quelle mise charmante! quels beaux diamans! que d'éclat! elle est vraiment éblouissante."—"Et la petite Comtesse!"—"Ah, c'est une belle figure; de beaux traits si vous voulez, mais l'affreuse toilette!"—"Passe pour la toilette,

mais quelle taille de nymphe! quelle fraicheur!"—"Oui, mais cette robe—cette coiffure de l'année passée!" A thousand to one but the lover of legitimate beauty yields, and leaves the great Herbault and the illustrious Victorine mistresses of the field.

The lower class of females here have a variety of costumes; some of which (as the white linen veil edged with lace) are rather pretty. But the little plaited cap, shaped like a fluted patty-pan and stuck on the top of the head, is the perfection of bad taste; and the handkerchief or shawl doubled and thrown over the hair, though not unbecoming, looks slatternly.

The singing at the cathedral was soft and sweet. We returned after the crowd had departed to look again at the venerable edifice, listen to long stories about Charlemagne, who is buried there, and lounge in the marble chair, in which tradition says he sat when crowned. Another emperor, and a great one too, stood at the foot of the steps that lead to it, while Josephine placed herself within its antique nook. This ancient church possesses a little of the manna dropped in the desert—a remnant of the Virgin's girdle, and many other well authenticated relics. I did not ask how they came there; if I had, I should probably have

received a very serious answer, and one perfectly satisfactory to the person who gave it. I do not understand these things, neither do those who believe in them,—but belief is not comprehension; we are sometimes most inclined to put faith in what we least understand, and perhaps for that very reason. They have another relic here of less disputable origin, a Nativity by Rubens, which has had the honour of passing nineteen years in the Louvre: an undeniable credential always brought forward with due solemnity.

From the cathedral to the Redoute,—an odd transition. The colonnades have a water-colour air of the Palais Royal, that is, of its lateral alleys, appropriated to the sale of indifferent prints and other trumpery. The very name of Aix-la-Chapelle makes one think (at least, makes me think) of cards and dice,—sharks and pigeons. It has a "professional odour" upon it, which is certainly not that of sanctity. I entered the Redoute with my head full of sham barons, German Catalinas, and the thousand-and-one popular tales of renowned knights of the green cloth,—their seducing confederates and infatuated dupes. The rooms are well distributed; the saloons handsome. A sprinkling of ladies, apparently (and really, as I understood) of the best water, the élite, in

short, of Aix — were lounging on sofas placed round the principal saloon, or fluttering about amidst a crowd of men, who filled up the centre of the room, or thronged round the tables that were ranged on one side of it. The players continued their occupation in death-like silence, undisturbed by the buzz, or the gaze of the lookers on; not a sound was heard but the rattle of the heaped-up money, as it was passed from one side of the table to the other; nor was the smallest anxiety or emotion visible on any countenance. The scene was unpleasing, though to me curious from its novelty. Ladies are admitted to play, but there were none so occupied this morning. I was glad of it; indeed, though English travellers are accused of carrying about with them a portable code of morality, which dissolves or stiffens like a soup-cake as circumstances may affect its consistency, yet I sincerely believe that there are few amongst us, who would not feel shocked at seeing one of the gentler sex in so unwomanly a position. The Cid, or Zaïre, or even the sometimes prohibited Tartuffe, are homilies compared with this species of Sabbath pastime. Don Giovanni is announced for this evening. I have never been able, or I should rather say willing, to conquer my prejudices (if such they can be called) against dramatic

representations by way of Sunday vespers. A peep at the Redoute is a salutary lesson; a play, a recreation which might soon become a want, an indispensable indulgence; I love a cheerful Sunday evening, but I love old habits also, when they are not bad ones. So we took a day-light view of the theatre, the exterior of which is simple and handsome, the interior of a graceful form, but the decorations cold, at least so they appeared with a white sun upon them. Near to the theatre, a rotunda, connected by corridors with two projecting wings, is in progress, and bids fair to be very handsome. It is erected over one of the hot springs, and is to contain all the pleasurable combinations deemed so necessary to the perfection o. a German watering-place.

Just returned from making the round of the tea-gardens in the gay and pretty suburbs of Aix. Louisberg seemed the most decidedly fashionable; it was crowded with festive groupes taking coffee, lemonade, ices, &c., on round tables placed in the sun, and in the shade, spread out or niched wherever there was space to put them on. The number of private and coronetted carriages in attendance vouched for the rank of at least part of the company. The coffee-house is half-way up a hill, round which winds a carriage-road, com-

manding a bold lively view of Aix and the surrounding country. We sat for some time quiet spectators of the general gaiety. A foreign Sabbath always sets an English mind thinking according to its particular bent. Some contrast its decent gaiety with the ale-house orgies of our peasants and workmen on their idle day, and others think regrettingly of the village church, and the evening prayer, and the family Bible unclasped and spread open before the venerable elder.—Our lacquais thought neither of the one or the other. A column of very humble dimensions, placed on the summit of the hill, was his point of display. It was "même chose que celle de Paris," he said; with him Ulm and Austerlitz went for nothing. The cheerfulness of the scene and landscape detained us long; we had but just time to look in at another holiday-gathering, and to make our escape from its too boisterous gaiety, before night closed in. The road was alive with thick-set lads and lasses, trudging joyously along, or winding through the shrubberies, which form, in some parts, a kind of running border to the carriage-drive,—it was altogether a very gay picture, of course more than usually so in its Sunday frame-work.

Another lively scene, though of a different kind, was the coup d'œil of the fruit and vegetable

market this morning. Such a showy crowd: the bright blue, or brighter red apron, the crimson or green shawl thrown over the head, the long cotton cloak of various hues, sometimes of white, floating amidst huge baskets full of red and green cabbage, carrots, &c., that really looked as if they had been selected for the brightness of their colours. In England a crowd is a dingy business, but on the continent, where every class of society has its own peculiar costume, and the spirit of coquetry is always at work to brighten and embellish, however coarsely, even a gathering of Flemish petticoats, or a combination of Prussian cloaks and handkerchiefs, produce the effect of a rich Dutch picture by a colourist of the first order. To-day it was a perfect Teniers; the plump cabbage, the tempting ham, coarse lasses, tipsy boors, and old women in all the tracery and minute net-work of wrinkles.

From Aix, a tame unenclosed country varied by woods, the roads frequently bordered with poplars and other shivery leafed things, interspersed with fruit-trees—very like some parts of France. An abundant harvest—dirty villages—and cottages, whether of brick or clay, tiled or thatched, always looking shabby. A pious prodigality of churches,—every cluster of cottages has its slated spire, often the only object that

marks a wide spread of flat country, and always, I think, a pleasing one. As we came within sight of Cologne, the mountains of the Rhine rose upon us in the distance:—we cried all hail! rejoiced to approach once more the mysterious regions of nature, and felt how much more the imagination is affected, and the mind excited and touched, by even the vague perspective of distant mountains, than by all the blooming luxury or soft verdure of a garden country, however beautiful.

Only one country house since we left Aix that declares itself a gentleman's residence. Cows harnessed to hay-carts; barriers, gates, posts, &c. painted in broad stripes of black and white;* women the perfection of ugliness, and not improved by a patch of black or blue cotton embroidered in white, stuck on the crown of the head and fastened on each temple with a gold or silver pin. A file of malefactors, chained two by two, was the first sight that presented itself to us at Cologne. The next was a printed paper pasted up in the saloon where we supped, signed by the master of the house, requesting the guests to lock their doors carefully, and to confide their money and valuable effects to his care, as the sole means of ensuring their safety.

* The national colours (I believe) of Prussia.

A similar notice was affixed to the door of each bed-chamber. The first impression was rather against the state of morals at Cologne.

But of its real claims in that way I cannot judge; of its interest as a town (at least to strangers) I can now form some idea, having broiled over its lions for several hours this scorching morning, driving up one miserable street and down another, till we were done to rags, without bringing home any impression but that of Rubens' magnificent picture of the Martyrdom of St. Peter, in the church of the saint,—of two quaint Albert Durers, in another church, which, with its convent (now suppressed) is supposed to occupy the site where the Capitol once stood, and still bears its Roman name,—and of the cathedral, a magnificent specimen of Gothic architecture, encumbered and blocked-up by scaffolds, and screens, and temporary partitions, that quite shut in its beautiful aisles. But I have forgotten: there is, besides, the house where Rubens is said to have been born, and Mary de Medici to have died. Had it remained in its original form, I should blush to have overlooked it, not from respect to the queen, but to the painter, the illustrious Peter Paul, in whom there is so much to laud, and sometimes to forgive; but, unluckily, the present building is not (we have

been positively assured) the identical one, but another erected on the same spot, so that the interest is not only diminished, but effaced by a disappointment.

We saw neither Gaspar, Balthazar, nor Melchior.* The French, in one of their friendly visits, carried off their crowns of rubies and diamonds, and as they are now reduced to silver gilt, we did not think the sight of their more than apocryphal skulls worth ten francs, the price modestly demanded for that gratification. We also resisted St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins, whose bones have been whitening here for I know not how many centuries, not wishing to discolour the impression, still fresh and vivid, which Claude's delightful picture had left on our memories. It would have been a pity to have spoiled, by a humbug of dried bones, the sunshine of the painter, and the poetry of the legend; for, absurd as it is, still there is poetry in it. We may imagine, for instance, the moment of the landing; the time, sunset,—a still, golden sun-set; the saint herself first stepping from the ship, just as it touches the shore, with all the dignity of her high function, and the

* The skulls of the magi have long been church property at Cologne.

pomp of piety (there is always pomp in the piety of a lady abbess) in her mien; the fair, pure, and devoted train following, with sedate and modest step, and eyes of virgin loveliness cast stedfastly down in holy abstraction, or looking upwards for support, as if the soul which shone in them had detached itself from all earthly ties, and sought to rejoin the bright assembly of its kindred spirits. But I have forgotten the lions of Cologne, and all the unseen wonders for which we took our cicerone's word. Churches and ruins, Roman arches, tombs of empresses, with unheard of names—"Plectrudes and Theophonicas," and of saints with softer appellations, such as Ida—a name with more of classical sweetness in it, than of sackcloth and ashes.

Cologne, long a Roman residence, still has its patrician families, and many vestiges of antiquity interesting to the deeply versed. But as a town, it is unique in its dirt and dulness; the streets narrow—the houses, with a few exceptions, old and lumbering; but old, without Gothic grandeur or the gloomy and massive vastness of the middle ages. Roofs of all shapes, some pointing their gables towards the street, others sloping forwards with two or three tier of windows in them, spread over all sorts of houses, but even this rough variety giving neither character nor originality.

A general air of meanness counteracts the effect (often happy) of this whimsical style of architecture. Tired of turning up and down so many villanous lanes, and fancying there must be something better, we desired to be driven to the show quarter, and were taken into a place full of wretched houses, where the bishop's palace, a large, plain, stuccoed mansion, flanked and fronted by mean habitations, was pointed out to us as the finest residence in Cologne; so we took a sweep of the quays and a first view of the Rhine, here very uninteresting; saw some vessels, principally from Amsterdam, and a show of slates and mill-stones for exportation, and then returned to our hotel, having seen enough of Cologne to satisfy us for the rest of our lives, without leaving any rebellious wishes. In the whole of our long ramble we did not meet a carriage of any kind, or even a horseman, or passably genteel female.

Dined at the table d'hôte, comprehending that we could not get any thing to eat if we did not. The company consisted of four gentlemen and our own party; two of the four affected a profound silence, a third threw off a word or two at intervals, and the fourth was graciously pleased to inform us, that all the French travelling or resident in England at the time of the detention at Verdun,

were thrown into prison and confined there until the termination of the war, by way of reprisal. He then favoured us with various anecdotes of the most remarkable knaves and dupes who have shown off at Spa and Aix for the last fifty years, mentioning a few titles, which he gravely assured us were those of well-known English noblemen, as "Milor Krister," &c. It was in vain that we disowned both the orthography and the sound; he stood his ground manfully, and, casting a triumphant glance on his audience, spelt the name twice over with an authoritative air, which evidently carried conviction to the minds of the admiring listeners. It was obvious that our knowledge of the Red Book went for nothing; he felt his triumph, and returning vigorously to the charge, opened a fresh budget, and shook out half a dozen anecdotes of Count Rice, and the *grand* Du Barry, not, perhaps, quite as old as the deluge, but tolerably threadbare from constant use, having been pressed into the serviee of every fashionable swindler who has appeared for the last century.

Devotion (is not this a misnomer when applied to the distorted impulses of terror or fanaticism?) puts itself forth here in the most repulsive form. The churches and streets not only contain the usual proportion of those dreadful crucifixions,

which represent the Redeemer of mankind under the abject appearance of a dying malefactor, writhing in the pangs of human suffering; but in the church of St. Peter, a skeleton, or its too faithful image, black as a mummy, nailed to a cross and covered with daubs of red paint to imitate blood, is set up as an object of veneration, —of worship to the grossly ignorant. These horrid effigies are usually covered with votive offerings, glass eyes, silver hearts, and strings of coloured beads. Adieu, Cologne!—I hope for ever. One look at a St. John, a sworn Raphael from the Orleans' gallery, for which its possessor (a German prince) asks a thousand guineas, and we are off.

July 25th.—A frightful country from Cologne; the harvest nearly got in, and the plough passed over the stubbles. Met more travellers this evening than at any time since we left Calais; but *met* them all,—none going our way; chiefly Germans, lumbering along in their heavy calèches. Passed through Bonn as night approached; could see but little of it, yet enough, with the help of lights in the windows, and the glare of white walls, to fancy it cheerful and pretty. I hope there is nothing eminently beautiful or romantic between Bonn and Gottisberg; if there is, I ask pardon

of the Dryades, and leave my regrets with their demi-divinities.

Sent away from an overflowing hotel at Gottisberg, but taken in at a minor caravansera of tolerable promise. The mistress of the house kisses my hand every five minutes; calls my children angels, and lards us over with an exaggerated and honied obsequiousness, which, I fear, bodes ill for to-morrow's reckoning.

CHAPTER IV.

GOTTISBERG — THE RHINE — COBLENTZ — SAINT GOAR — BINGEN — JOHANNISBERG — BIBERICH — WEISBADEN.

At length we have the Rhine in its loveliness, and its seven mountains too (now classic ground with us); the moon sleeping on their pointed summits, and touching their "castled crags" with a sweet melancholy light that accords with the scene and with its legend, the loves of the adventurous Roland and the fair and faithful Hildegond.

I am not sure that Rolandseck, though near, is visible; we shall, however, pass it presently. It is a pretty cheerful looking place, this village of Gottisberg, where a few days might be passed very pleasingly with the assistance of the mountains and the Rhine, which here puts on its character of grandeur and of beauty for the first time, or throws it off, as we should say, were we tracing it

from its source; for all below Gottisberg is comparative insipidity.

Our palavering hostess proved a very knave, and made her father, a straight-forward honest German, ashamed of her petty iniquities. He scolded her before us for some exorbitant item which she had edged into our bill, but nothing could ruffle the serenity of her temper. She bowed us out with the same benignant smile with which she had ushered us in, feeling perhaps, as Madame de Montespan did, who, when the Duchess d'Usez expressed astonishment at the severity of her penitential inflictions, replied, "Faut-il parce que je fais un mal, faire tous les autres?"

I have made a vow not to say a word of the crags of Drachenfels. They have had their poet —and such a one!—such a descriptive painter! An humble, though true adorer of nature like myself, feels ashamed of the meagre words in which ideas freshly awakened, and thronging for utterance, are expressed; and after dwelling on those beautiful lines which reflect the Rhine and its landscape bright and living as in a faithful mirror, gives way to a shabby feeling of flatness and insufficiency, which paralyses the fingers, and the mind too.

But I must say one word of that island solitude, that paradise of love and piety, Nonnenworth, because I have seldom been more disappointed than I was on seeing it. I had thought of the lonely tower—the ivied porch—the tall cloisteral tree of melancholy aspect—of monastic silence and deep seclusion, till I had shaped it into something familiar to my fancy. Nothing was ever imagined more unlike the reality. A spacious solid house, announcing a substantial quantum of worldly comfort—an inn, I think—at all events a *pension* with (as we are told) eight English families living gaily within its walls—sound judges, I have no doubt, of the respective merits of Laubenheim and Johannisberg; and lovers too, as the English generally are, of beautiful nature. But the bare idea of a modern boarding-house and the convivialities of a table d'hôte, is sudden death to the poetic feeling, and to the reveries of an idle dreamer like myself.

As we drove along towards Remegan, we came up with a train of pilgrims, journeying onwards to a church in the hills to offer up prayers for rain, and chaunting as they went, rudely, but not unpleasantly. I am afraid that we have left the mountains behind us, and must take in exchange such every-day things as orchards, corn-fields,

and dingy villages. Too many vines about Remegan. The vineyards of the Rhine are like the vine-clad hills of France—prettier things to read of than to see. It is only in the sunny world at the other side of the Alps, that the vine becomes beautiful, and flings about its delicious festoons as if the hand of taste itself had directed the arrangement.

It is market-day at Remegan; the people look boorish, and seem not over civil. A woman, who lent us a little oil for something out of order about the carriage, refused any remuneration; but refused it sulkily. The act was obliging, but spoiled, like many other well-intentioned acts, by the ungracious way in which it was done. As we advance towards Remegan, the hills to the right assume a bolder character, and are warmly draperied with wood. But the opposite banks are cold, and the whole picture far below its reputation.

The mouldering tower of Andernacht would show well on a pointed crag, or beetling over a melancholy valley; but standing on a flat by the road-side, its effect is lost. Gertrude made a sketch of it, while we sat on the trunk of a tree near to the crumbling walls which still enclose the town, and are all that is left of its former importance.

The sketch-book has no sinecure here; it is like the journal,—every object at first finds a place in it; but as the traveller advances, the plot thickens, and the anxious desire to let nothing pass unrecorded yields to the necessity of selection.

At length the Rhine redeems its character, very poorly sustained since we left the mountain region of the seven peaks. Coblentz spreads her fortifications showily, stretching out her towers and ramparts to all points of the compass. And the old batteries of Ehrenbreitstein mingle well with the dark rocks that break down perpendicularly to the river. Passed a bridge over the Moselle, from whose confluence with the Rhine at this spot the town derives its name. The position of Coblentz is striking; the Rhine sweeps by, touching the walls of its buildings. Rocks, fortresses, domes, and towers, that look as if they had withstood the mining of time and the battering of war for ages, rise up every where, and give it an imposing character. The interior, or as much of it as we saw, looked cheerful; the women handsome; the streets peopled, and some of a respectable breadth. The lower order of females are fair and showy; they gather up their hair behind, and knotting it on the back of the head, enclose it in a cap, or rather band of

coloured silk, embroidered with beads, steel bugles, or gold and silver tinsel, which has a pretty effect and gives, when well arranged, something of a classical air to the head.

The Germans (I mean of the Rhine) seem to have a particular tenderness for birds and animals. In every garden some unhappy favourites lurk amidst the putrescent vegetables, flapping their wings and stretching out their necks as approaching footsteps threaten their repose. I have just now escaped a combat with a turkey-cock, who bristled up fiercely at sight of my red shawl, and have taken refuge in a garden full of animal life. But the stork is *the* favourite; it seems cherished and held sacred here, as in some countries of the east. Poor things! they look very sad and ugly in their petted state, but become the lonely strand or island-rock, falling well into a picture of solitary nature.

Drove after dinner to the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, and looked down upon a view which effaced all the disappointments of the morning. I know of nothing better in its own peculiar way. The noble river pours its broad sinuous tide through a valley all life and beauty. Its shores, no longer cold and monotonous, swell up into the dignity of mountains, or spread out their green

and wooded lawns to receive the towns and villages that rise smilingly upon them. It is its moment of magnificence. The dignity of motion is never more finely expressed than by the everlasting flow of a noble river. And as the Rhine rolls on, receiving calmly and as a thing of course, the abundant tribute which the Moselle pours into its bosom, the mind is impressed with images of grandeur, power, and duration. It is not a faultless view, for the banks of the Moselle are flat, and do nothing for it; but it is a truly charming one, —rich, bright, and original.

Two or three miles higher up than Coblentz, the river makes a superb sweep in the midst of delicious scenery; castles rising on one crag, and ruins hanging on another. The Lahn, issuing from its forest-cradle, throws itself into the Rhine just opposite to the village of Kappellan, and flowing between the sweet island-looking peninsulas of Oberlahnstein and Niderlahnstein, with their churches and trees, villages and ruins, forms a picture full of gentle beauty.

We have now a garden country, thickly planted with fruit-trees, to Rahens, an odd Swissish kind of town, or rather village. Painted houses of all shapes, looking as if an enormous weight had fallen down on their roofs, and pressed them out

of their fair proportions. The villages of the Rhine, charmingly placed, and most alluring from a distance, are wretched concerns within. The islands, too, have now but little interest; their convents, on which hung many a legend of love and sorrow, are all demolished, and they are little more than patches of weeds and willows. I could wish, also, for trees of more dignity; we have seen but few of an elevated character. The walnut tries to supply the place of forest timber, but does it imperfectly; and the absence of those fine natural antiquities, that look as if they were coeval with the creation, is the more to be regretted, as their pomp would well become the everlasting flood and its majestic barriers. But it is in England that we must look for the absolute monarchy of the oak, and the emulative loftiness of the almost as regal elm. Here there is abundant foliage, but the trees are rather of a low and tufted kind, not glorious in their singleness, and entirely losing whatever they may possess of decided character when removed even to a small distance from the eye. In fact, the vine is here the true child of the soil; every fissure, nook, and crevice is choked up and smothered,—every projecting stone overhung with its lavish vegetation. What a paradise for the reprobate gods and poets

of antiquity! the very air breathes of Bacchus and Anacreon, of leering nymphs and reeling satyrs, and yet little is added to the beauty of the scenery by this clustering profusion; but the mind fastens on joyous images of ease and abundance, which, as they happen to be borne out by the handsome appearance of the population, give it some agreeable food to work upon.

Still moving on through a continued garden, hills of all shapes and various beauty, and now and then a castle, or rather its ruins, in a bold position at the opening of a green or wooded gorge with a village or church at its base, stand out shouldering the heavens. A soft, half sunny day, lights and shadows, but no glare; perhaps the most favourable sky for scenery.

The valley soon narrows; sometimes the mountains descend abruptly to the river, leaving just space enough for the road, and again retreat, as if to make way for a stripe of vines, or an orchard meadow. At this moment something very large and flat sweeps slowly round a wooded projection; it is a raft floating down from Switzerland to some port of Holland. It passes heavily along, though favoured by the current and aided by many hands. I counted 130 persons, all, or nearly all, employed in its navigation.

A wooden construction in the centre serves as a place of shelter for both men and merchandise. Forests of timber are thus floated down the Rhine from the valleys of the Murg, the Neckar, &c. This was but a small affair; the large rafts are sometimes a thousand feet long, and peopled as thickly as Noah's ark. The passage must be a dull one for any but an inveterate draughtsman, who may sketch at his ease and linger upon the minutiæ, as he would upon a picture suspended before him on a wall. And so may all those who struggle up the Rhine in the passage-boat, which must, however, be the favourite mode of conveyance here, for we have scarcely met a traveller or seen a carriage since we left Gottisberg. The pilgrims of idleness or fashion, who drawl or drive through Switzerland swearing 'tis wonderous fine, or beshrewing the rumbling cars, noisy inns, and impracticable mountains, seem to overlook the Rhine—heaven bless them for it! One may still stand at a window here, and look at something more interesting than the parties that spread themselves over all the attainable spots in the Oberlands: English ladies in their long cloaks, oozing shoes, and draggled petticoats; German students in their caps of defiance; artists, amateurs, and all the miscellaneous rabble that defy classification.

At Boppart, a town (every cluster of cottages in this beautiful Rhingau calls itself a town) of the narrowest lanes I have ever passed through in a four-wheeled carriage, we found ourselves again in the midst of gardens and vines, trained prettily into trellised walks and southern-looking alcoves. To the left, ruins rise upon dark rocks, and stretch their fragments from point to point of the shattered crags. Towns and villages lie basking on the river's brink mingled with foliage and the mouldering remains of the turreted walls, within which even the most insignificant appears to have been enclosed in the gone-by day of its strength.

At Saltzig the river makes another noble bend, and the mountains, folding over each other, take the bold character of wild lake scenery. We could willingly linger for some days at the clean and comfortable inn at St. Goar, looking at the river rolling its broad tide proudly, as if conscious of all the charming things on its banks, and clambering up to the mouldering castles that make pictures of all the hills; but it is not feasible,—so much the better for the shy lizards who are sunning themselves on the old walls this bright day, and for the swifts and lapwings, hereditary possessors of the loop-holes and buttresses, to whose unaccustomed ears the fall of footsteps

would sound like battering rams. However, it is a bright and beautiful scene even from the windows, and I sat in one, with the shade on my side and the sun on the landscape, indulging my dreaming propensities, and peopling the mountain solitudes with the friends of early days (for one makes acquaintances in after life, kind, pleasing, and often useful ones, but rarely real friends), until dinner, and a very comfortable one, made its appearance.

This is quite a beautiful place; such a gathering of castles. Above, the fortress of Rheinfels, bearing itself fiercely though in ruins; on the opposite mountain-ridge, Katz, a true painter's castle, in the right stage of picturesque decay, clustering its towers with the thousand hues of time upon them round the summit of a rocky height; and beneath, a green lap of land advancing gently into the river, with a bright-looking village upon it, and a mixing-up of boats moored in the sun, and cows reposing in the shade,—an harmonious blending of past and present, and their associations, which fills the eye and mind delightfully. Another castle (Mause), with the village of Wilnich below it, closes up the valley.

That holy man, St. Goar, had the true hermit instinct for the beautiful and the romantic. It seems

to have been left by the early fathers of the desert as a legacy to those who came after them to preach the faith. In Catholic countries a stranger's attention is rarely attracted by a site of peculiar majesty or loveliness, that a monastery or its vestiges may not be seen or traced upon it. A little beyond the village of St. Goar, we tried the effect of an echo, prodigiously vaunted by our conductor; the reverberating rocks returned the blast of a trumpet with electrifying fulness. It had all the essentials, I believe, of a fine echo; the dying fall, and countless reverberations. All here is dark and powerful: the black rocks, scanty vegetation, and narrowing river, continue the character of wild lake scenery, for which the garden gaieties of the Rhine, between Coblentz and St. Goar, are now exchanged. But now again another charming picture stands out brightly in the evening sunbeams, —the castle of Schonberg, exquisitely perched above the town of Oberwessel, of whose towers and ramparts enough still remain to vouch for its former consequence. The tender green of the walnut falls in well here, and does all, or nearly all, the honours of the wooded scenery.

Another raft has just passed down, followed by a boat laden with vegetables, and a gay freight of bare-headed girls; some steering, others rowing,

and all as merry as light hearts and sunny skies can make them. This alternation of bright touches with the sombre colouring of dark rocks and stern defiles, of the prismatic hues and mysterious gloom of nature, is fine and original. Cities and peopled fortresses sending out the fulness of life, and blending its agitation with the solitude of the mountain recess, with the inaccessible rock and the crumbling ruin, are not the common elements of every-day scenery; nor is the effect produced on the mind by their combination of an ordinary nature.

An island, with a tower upon it, has just now brought out its legend from the loquacious D——. A pithy tale of some wicked priest or baron—I have forgotten which—seized upon by his harassed and exasperated vassals, and thrown into a cave to be devoured by rats,—a death emulating Don Roderick's in horror. But there is no end here to traditionary lore, to tales of marauding lords, fierce priests, and faithful, but ill-fated lovers.

The village girls on the Rhine are often very handsome. I think it was at Coblentz that we first observed their fine eyes and fine shapes, and their pretty mode of dividing the hair into long smooth tresses, platted and turned up round the back of the head, as the young women in the

Venetian states are fond of wearing it; but *they* add a single full-blown rose, and look like Poussin's Arcadians, or the shepherdesses of the valley of Tempe. This beautiful hair is here the young female's chief embellishment; it is usually light coloured, and always glossy and luxuriant. At Bacharach, a sort of town, with carved doors, painted houses, vines, and ramparts, we remarked some very pretty girls; one of tall stature and barefooted stood by the road-side with a pitcher on her head, holding a child by the hand, and talking to an old man who sat on a stone beside her: it was an antique bass-relief coloured into life. This Bacharach was the Rhenish Falernus: whether its wines still retain their ancient reputation, or have yielded to the superior strength or more exquisite perfume of the Hocheim, or Johannisberg, I know not. But the altar of Bacchus* still remains; the waters of the Rhine still ripple round it; and the vine-dressers have not yet ceased to believe that an abundant vintage may be reckoned upon, whenever the face of the prophetic stone is visible above the wave.

Castles and villages thicken so upon us, that we are as weary of asking their names, as the faithful

* A stone in the river, so called from an ancient tradition.

D—— is of answering us. It is now the supper hour, and every mountain is marked by thin wreaths of blue smoke ascending slowly from its base. Troops of boys and girls are driving the cows down from the hills and turning them into the cottages, which they appear to share with their masters. The kine belong to Pharaoh's lean stock, but the children are Correggio's very best. I never saw so many bright happy little faces. They kiss their hands to us as we pass, and when they find themselves noticed, drop quaint curtsies and try to throw a demure look into their beautiful and peculiarly shaped blue eyes. An indifferent inn at Bingen, brackish water, and bad smells—and bad wine too, though in the very heart of the Rhingau.

From Cologne to Coblentz the Rhine is (or was at least to us) a disappointment. But from this sweeping condemnation I must exempt the short mountain-stretch from Gottisberg, in which the seven peaks and their consecrated neighbourhood are included. From Coblentz to Bingen, it is a gallery of living pictures, rich, romantic, and in mellow keeping, not surpassed, perhaps, by any other river scenery of a similar character. It has, however, the usual defect of all shut-in views; its beauties confront the sight, and their details being obvious and minutely developed, want the

tender shading, the mysterious vapoury colouring which can only be obtained when the eye is removed to a considerable distance from its object. But this want of a softening medium, and consequently, of aerial perspective, is not the defect of the Rhine scenery in particular, but of river views in general. And then it is so rich in equivalents—so strong in picture; a true Smellfungus would exclaim, "Yes; but the pictures are all alike." It is true, the dark gorge, or the green defile, retreating from the river and sentinelled by its lonely ruin, which, though now but the stern shadow of feudal tyranny and lawless power, still looks down baronially upon the village spread out sunnily at its feet, is a scene of frequent recurrence. But the thronged and the deserted city, (for the Rhine has both) the Gothic architecture, the full tide imaging in its sweeping course the dreary wildness of the unvisited lake, and yet bearing along with it the curious, the enlightened, the lover of nature, the man of business, strangers from the north and from the south, and from all parts of the civilized world,—beating at one moment against a bleak, perpendicular rock, and the next, gliding past the populous habitations of man, must be allowed a character of originality distinct and powerful. And how individually beau-

tiful are the detached pictures, even admitting their general sameness. The mountains too, though not sublime, are dark and lonely; if they do not fill the mind with that unspeakable and before unfelt emotion, which quickens the pulse and elevates the soul when the everlasting Alps first open on the view, yet the imagination is awakened and the heart is touched. We are pleased to mingle the poetic feeling with the movement of life, and to see the ties of society cherished in the bosom of nature.

But the characteristic scenery of the Rhine—its castles, rocks, bays, and mountains, all but the frequent town, seems to end at Bingen. The hills sink into gentle swells or spread out into corn fields, and the landscape affects to play the agreeable, though with but moderate success. The river, noble in breadth, is poor in accompaniments; vines planted in patches, or on ledges propped by low walls, very stripy and arid. Crossed the river at Bingen, and had a tedious navigation, though both oars and sails were put in requisition. Our boatmen loitered to take in a quartetto of pedlars and peasant women, with rugged features and petticoats short enough to disclose the garter, heading the very white or very blue stocking tightly drawn up. This last article of dress is

frequently dispensed with here; but when worn, is sported with a degree of coquetry of which our country girls have no idea.

A Russian, (or a *make-believe* one) buried up to the eyes in a furred collar, reposed during the passage in the straw at the bottom of his britschka, and when we landed at the other side was no longer visible. We amused ourselves in conjecturing a cause for this obvious desire of concealment, in which he appeared to be aided by a German and his wife, apparently of the class of small gentry, who joined us as we were quitting shore. There was certainly a mystery, but Paul Pry himself would have been defeated by the adroitness of the managing parties. There was no such thing as sifting it, and still worse, we could not find out whether the "unknown" was old or young; a smuggler of tobacco, brandy, or some other prohibited provocative; or a proper whiskered hero of romance.

On landing, we found a boy lying in wait to decoy us to the top of a tower, from which we saw a view not worth looking at. Nine times in ten the only gainer in these cases is the guide. But novelty, always the luxury of the mind, becomes, if over-fed, its appetite; and the fresh temptation is eagerly snatched at, in the hope of fresh excitement.

We had been strongly advised to take the left bank of the Rhine on quitting Bingen, and were told that by doing so, we should keep close to its delicious shores almost to Weisbaden. But the Rhine is here a very every-day affair; its banks, inadequate in character to the breadth of the river, and not remarkable as pastoral scenery, soon cease to engage the eye, and leave it at leisure to remark the heavy colour of its waters. We had scarcely noticed this before; but now, when we are thrown too far from it to see the rapidity of its current, which, from the intervention of fields and orchards frequently happens, it looks like a bed of liquified mud. Prince Metternich has the best of it here. The famous vineyard which produces that true nectar of the Rhingau, the renowned Johannisberg, is his; and where is the bon vivant who would not give a score of ruined castles, owls, ivy, and all, for such an enviable possession.

One small, dull town treads so closely on the heels of another, that the eye tires of the glare of white walls, and scarcely reconciles itself to the carved door and lofty gateway. There is something for the imagination in the undressed antiquity, the gloomy dwellings, and mouldering villages that we have left behind; but these are

too trim to interest the fancy. A solid legitimate house is a very comfortable thing to live in, but the lumbering tenement, unscraped and unvarnished, with all its visible wood-work, redundant roof, and incongruous proportions, is worth (in a picturesque point of view) a whole street of brick and mortar, with the best Prussian slates to boot.

On turning from the Rhine towards Weisbaden, we passed Biberich—the very showy and spacious residence of the Duke of Nassau. The gardens appeared extensive and tastefully planted, but flat. Country houses are studded about rather thickly between Bingen and Biberich, but they are unattractive—at least to an English eye. Country houses are our saucy point; our own delightful homes make us fastidious, and we cannot subdue our tongues to the utterance of the expected note of admiration when we see the arid terrace, the formal parterre, the clipped tree, and the unclipped grass, and hear "la belle nature" hinted at, as if she, sweet soul! had anything to do with such perpetrations. Other nations (all nations nearly) excel us in palaces; very many in the size and magnificence of their town residences; but the park and garden scenery of England is unequalled: there we outstrip all competition. It freshens the mind even to think of our upland lawns and

wooded slopes, "dingles and bushy dells," and the wide spread of delicious turf, always green and smooth, and fresh, as if nature had distilled a dew on purpose for it. No tufts of rank grass, no melancholy nettles, or weedy church-yard luxuriance; and yet a richness of beauty, a freedom of vegetation, that banishes all appearance of over cropping and trimming. And then our noble single trees, so lofty and wide spreading, that two or three judiciously placed are sufficient to give character, and even dignity, to a scene otherwise without pretension. Indeed, even the redolence of flowers (delicious as a minor embellishment) seems peculiar to our northern climate; I should rather, perhaps, say the passion for flowers, by which they are brought together in endless and bright variety, and fostered into a luxuriance charming to the senses, and rarely seen under more southern skies, where the wind blows the seed as it lists, and leaves it to spring up in the midst of all foul and noxious things.

But what we are most happy in, in this our own peculiar art of landscape gardening, is the skill which takes advantage of the capabilities of nature, and softens down or hides its defects. Our graceful and effective mode of planting is scarcely guessed at abroad; fancy rarely exuberates beyond

the close forest, or the prim avenue,—both good in their places; the first undeniably so, and the last too, I think, were it only for its shade, and the sunbeams that sometimes fall slantingly through the branches, reddening the rough bark and chequering the grassy path with their quivering shadows. But the eye tires of always looking at the same object, and yet finds nothing else to fly off to. I have known many foreigners who detested London, even while frankly admitting its magnificence; but never met with one who did not expatiate with delight on the freshness and beauty of our rural scenery. The impression, however, is not permanent; for they go back to the stagnant pool, and the rank grass, and the gilt weathercock, without a wish, or at least without an effort, to improve upon the taste of their forefathers.

CHAPTER V.

WEISBADEN — LA PLATTE — SONNINBERG — MAYENCE—FRANKFORT.

Retournons à nos moutons. Not a disposable bed at the Hôtel des Quatre Saisons;* drove about in despair, and after having explored every cranny of Weisbaden, were glad to put up with a small apartment at the Hôtel Nassau, a petty inn, but in an excellent situation. I was astonished on entering the town; the first coup-d'œil was a chapter on anticipations. I had fancied a small gathering of houses, with something of the rust of antiquity upon them, hid in a rocky nook, with an hotel or two, and a few cottage lodging-houses scattered about amidst trees and gardens—and behold! streets and squares open on us that vie in magnificence with those of a capital. Our windows look upon an area of considerable extent, in

* Or "*Nations*,"—I forget which.

which a very fine street (Whielelmstrap) terminates; a large grassy carpet covers the centre; and on each side is the unfailing, and, in this broiling weather, most essential double alley, the leafy alley, formed of three rows of trees, and found every where in France, and (should this blazing sun and cloudless sky continue) in Germany, I hope, also. The façade and colonnades of the Kursal extend across the extremity of the square, and above its roof corn-fields and gentle hills, as yet unbuilt upon, are visible, but probably will not remain so long. The rage for dabbling in brick and mortar has gained Weisbaden. A theatre is in splendid progress, and many other fine things projected. Here, as in several of the Rhenish towns, a sand stone of a very peculiar red colour, veined with white, is much used in ornamental architecture, to which it gives, when seen from a distance, the air of an opera decoration.

This is the Duke of Nassau's birth-day, and his loyal subjects have closed it with fire-works, not quite so grand as the thunders of St. Angelo on Easter Sunday, or the *bouquet* of a fête St. Louis, at Paris, but brilliant enough to make our gay Vauxhall "pale its ineffectual fires." Just now a boy, whom we had seen in the street and had taken

for a rope-dancer or a tumbler, has brought us gloves made in his native town (Inspruck) for sale; his dress—the costume of the Tyrolese peasant—is strangely fanciful: jacket and culottes of velvet, with an embroidered garter below the knee, a showy waistcoat of shaded silk, orange and brown, and a handkerchief of the same material, but of still brighter colours, tied loosely round the throat, and so arranged as to allow a string of small gold beads to make their appearance beneath it. Tight half-boots fringed, a watch key, surmounted by an enormous chrysophraze and suspended to a gaudy ribbon, and a beaver hat with a narrow scooping brim, a high conical crown, and a large bunch of artificial roses blended with marabout feathers in the front, finishes a toilette which seems more suitable to one of Whilelmeister's ambulating troop than to a hardy mountaineer. The boy, however, looks blithe and pretty in it, and I can imagine it becoming to a handsome young peasant, with the free and lofty port which is said to belong to the people of the Tyrol.

We have some difficulty here in making ourselves understood, and but for L——'s very ingenious devices, should stick fast in the mire in which we are for ever floundering. French is of no use whatever; English serves our purpose

better; many words in common use are so nearly similar in German and in English, that we contrive to boggle on with the assistance of a little dumb show. We are the only English in the hotel, and my poor maid, who fails entirely in her efforts to make herself understood, is smoked, and starved, till even her patience (for she has no small stock) is exhausted. Every thing is inveterately German. Our dinner to-day consisted of a kind of pottage (excellent—I doubt if Esau sold his birth-right for a better), beef-steaks, sausages (all onions), stewed cabbage, and fried potatoes. Then for the second course came calves'-head sliced and boiled in gruel, or something very like it, eels martyred *à la tartare*, and an *omelette aux confitures;* and for the third, mutton roast to rags, a piece of beef ditto, a duck, preserved cherries, and a sallad. To all this must be added the indispensable plate of sliced ham, always recommended as *bon pour la digestion*, and served as inevitably as bread. What an awful redundancy for five persons! and yet nothing eatable but the pottage. But the people are very civil and anxious to please, a compensation for many minor privations, not to mention the refreshing equivalent of a clean table-cloth and napkins, too often rarities in Italy, but here everyday luxuries. So, alas! is tobacco indulged in

(fatally for the organs of those who cannot smoke) by every member of the table d'hôte which holds its eatings in the apartments under ours. No doubt at the Quatre Saisons folks are more polite, and leave such coarse pungencies to the vulgarians of the Nassau. And yet, on reflection, I doubt it; the thing (I mean the passion for smoking) seems inherent in the breast of a true German; all ranks appear to be equally under its influence,—the tube of amber or ebony mounted in gold, or the common pipe of painted porcelain, makes the only difference.

Our evening drive has been delightful. A mountain-road through groves of chestnuts and forests of oak mingled with beech and many other trees of various hues and foliage, brought us to La Platte, a hunting-seat of the Duke de Nassau, from whence we looked across a broken and richly wooded country upon the winding Rhine, with the towns of Mayence and Cassel, and others of smaller note, spread out upon its banks; and in the distance and around, mountains, not indeed of Alpine grandeur, but sufficiently prominent to give spirit and character. We thought the landscape full of charm. It is true, the serenity and freshness of the evening, the soft lights and lengthened shadows, the colours of the sky and air, may

have given it an accidental beauty, but we looked upon it long, and left it with regret. The chateau is an unpretending edifice, on a green platform scooped out of the forest which girdles it round,—a wild and lonely forest, where one might chance to hear the horn of the wild Yagar calling up the midnight echoes, or the yelling of the spectre hounds baying the moon. The road runs within a few yards of the chateau, and is only separated from it by a patch of green sward. No garden, no flowers, no enclosure. The effect, though rather naked, is much more in keeping with the wild forest scenery, than the straight alley, plaster cupids, or leafy intricacies of a French garden, or the architectural terraces of an Italian villa. The stag that crossed our path as we ascended the mountain, would not have harmonized with nature in full dress. The children of the Duke, who is a widower, were walking in the woods with their attendants, very simply dressed. The prince himself passed us twice on the road; he seemed a young and handsome man, as far as I could judge through the cloudy medium of a cigar, and appears to possess, in a supreme degree, the royal passion for rapid movement. He ascended the mountain in full gallop; and, though certainly not like Louis Dixhuit in the outward man, recalled

to my mind his diurnal airings* and return to the Tuileries, his hat white with dust, and face black with heat, the ground seeming to fly from under the swift steeds of his escort, who were suspected of considering this kind of active service as not amongst the most agreeable of their professional duties.

The ladies of Weisbaden expose their faces, and sometimes more than their faces, to the skyey influences. They brave the hot glare of a vertical sun bare-headed, and frequently without even the shelter of a parasol. At one o'clock bells ring, and on great occasions a trumpet sounds, to summon the frequenters of the various table-d'hôtes; to dinner then issue forth from their respective quarters, the beaus and belles of Weisbaden, in a sort of toilette half French, half fancy; thick-set family groupes, German matrons of ample circumference, pudding-headed papas, and little misses with cork-screw ringlets or long platted tresses hanging down the back. To-day (Sunday) an unusual bustle is visible; tables are laid at the Kursal for more than three hundred persons, and twice that number appear to be at this moment

* For which fifty horses were said to be daily put in requisition.

elbowing their way through its avenues. This same Kursal is a very handsome thing in its way, a pleasure-house after the German fashion, containing a very fine ball-room, *restaurant*, rooms for play, a species of bazaar, &c., with a supplementary garden or pleasure-ground. To this concentration of enjoyments crowds are now thronging; all the Weisbaden population, foreign and domestic, are in motion. The bell rings, and three hundred people take their seats at the table d'hôte. A motley crew, eating in silence—every thing carved on a side-table, and then served round to the impatient expectants. While the great work goes on, a band of itinerant musicians, reinforced, perhaps, by some vagrant vocalists, wake the high harmonies of Mozart or Weber, or bustle through the elaborate mazes of Beethoven very creditably.

The Sunday gaieties have brought out a variety of costumes from the adjacent villages, all, separately taken, ugly and unbecoming, but blending well in the general picture, and having always something original and characteristic about them. The young girls wear their long and shining hair divided in the Rhenish fashion, and fastened up behind without any covering. They come like the king's daughters of old to the fountains to draw

water, which they bear away in tall vessels on their heads; the necessity of poising their load evenly gives them great firmness of step and carriage; they are generally tall, and in this most graceful and advantageous attitude, lose entirely the vulgar appearance which usually belongs to females in the laborious classes of life. A young girl unencumbered by fashionable drapery, barefooted, and poising with one hand the pitcher which she carries on her head, is immediately transformed into a nymph of antiquity; we think of the wells of Egypt and the fountain of Arethusa, and forget that we are looking at a German country maiden.

I sincerely wish that there was any illusion by which sliced eels wrapped up in batter and sprinkled with currants, or pigeons stuffed with custard, could be converted into cutlets, or any other familiar dish. New scenes, and the ideas they generate, have for me a charm so powerful, that when travelling, I seldom think of any thing beyond the exigencies of life, and can easily dispense with its comforts. But such unheard of dishes as we have had to-day! such barbarous combinations!—worse than Mr. Shandy's black broth, or the common olio of a Spanish posada. What a hand the good folks here would have

made of Miss Nelly O'Brien's slipper! O! that the same world should hold the illustrious Ude, and the man of batter and gruel who calls himself *chef de cuisine* at the Hôtel Nassau!

> "Can such things be,
> And overcome us like a summer cloud,
> Without our special wonder!"

The castle of Sonninberg, on an insulated hill in the centre of corn-fields and fruit-trees, was the object of our evening drive. A village has arisen within its ruined walls, nearly enclosing the steep on which the tower, the only part that still retains its original form, stands. Some careful hand has traced walks, too broad and too trimly gravelled, from the village to the ruin, and within its walls. The picture is pleasing, and prettily shut in, but I abominate trim ruins; bad taste can perpetrate nothing more offensive. I would not pluck up a bearded thistle or a blade of long grass, to plant the freshest rose-tree in its place; or disturb the family of ivies, whose coeval look and enduring character accord with the old walls to which they cling, to make room for the tulip of Cappadocia, or the lilac of Ispahan. And for the bolder accompaniments, I would have a few rough trees spreading their branches within and without; old

fantastic things covered with the hoar moss of ages, stretching out their knotted arms and tessalating the earth with their giant fibres,—but nothing more—unless it were a wall-flower, to be forgiven for its iron stains, its sturdy contempt of care, and desert fragrance.

After our return we took a twilight walk in the garden of the Kursal, and then encountered a ball in the grand saloon: a magnificent room with galleries supported by columns of Limbourg marble. Waltzing was the order of the evening:—waltzing in Germany! The very idea was a spell. After having read Werther, and heard travellers dwell on the sentimental grace, the ravishing expression with which the German ladies execute their national dance, I expected to see the very poetry of motion; but instead of the swimming movement with which a Frenchwoman whirls, or rather suffers herself to be whirled round, we had a vigorous exhibition of whisking and springing. Both ladies and gentlemen waltzed as if their chief aim was to keep the pores open; there was an abundant ardour, a hearty liking for the exercise, but an utter absence of all charm. Nothing remained of the illusion but the delicious music. I delight in the music of the waltz,—the German music;—Hummel has surrounded it with

an atmosphere of tenderness, and Weber poured his dying and almost sweetest breath into it. The Weisbadians delight in its tee-totum movement. Only one quadrille was danced, or rather jumped; for though the crowd pressed between us and the performers so as to prevent our seeing the action of the feet, we could catch a glance of their heads, and part of their bodies, shooting up at intervals above the multitude. Herod, the Tetrarch, would not have given a silver penny for such an exhibition. The dearth of beauty was extraordinary. I understood from a gentleman acquainted with the society of Weisbaden, that the ball to-night was rather indifferently composed, a mixture of all ranks. I should have judged so from the style of dancing, but as mere beauty is not an affair of blood, however its charm may be strengthened by the mind's developement and the habits of refined society, its total absence was not the less remarkable. The dress, deportment, air, were all of a piece. One fair-haired girl in mourning, with a large straw hat and a soft sweet expression of countenance, looking like a pastor's daughter of Auguste Lafontaine's own coining, was the only attractive person in the whole assembly. Every kind of toilette seemed admissible, from a chaplet of roses or a necklace of

gems, to a muslin cap or a morning bonnet. The dancing beaus affected the evening frock and transparent stocking; but the elders, in general, wore boots ingrained with dust, and exhibited the negligent toilette into which men of a certain age are too apt to fall on the continent; for in England, attention to the neatness, if not to the beauism of dress, seems to increase with years, and helps to make our elderly gentlemen the finest veteran battalion extant. But for the ladies!—Goethe, Madame de Staël, Auguste Lafontaine, and others, have given us such sentimental notions about German women, that we come amongst them dreaming of golden hair and beaming eyes with the light of Heaven in them; of creatures all love and purity; the fair and fragile lilies of the creation, who "toil not, neither do they spin," but hang like seraphs on the path of man, shedding balm and strewing rose-leaves, and securing his heart and protection by their beauty and their helplessness. It would be highly unjust to judge from the sample which we have seen to-night of German grace and loveliness; but the paucity of charms was certainly striking. The dames looked coarse, and the damsels heavy. We were particularly disappointed, having seen several faces in our evening drive which we thought pretty; but the

shade of a large bonnet is very favourable, and a face that seems charming under it, is frequently counteracted in a ball-room by round shoulders, an awkward stoop, or an inelegant deportment.

We had taken our seats in a corner of the room immediately on entering, and soon perceived that we were the only English in it, with the exception, I believe, of one or two gentlemen. Several persons addressed us, evidently with the desire of being polite, and, perhaps, as a thing of course to strangers, pressing Gertrude to dance, which she, of course, declined doing. It was, however, rather difficult to make a refusal intelligible in dumb show to a cavalier, who was predetermined not to understand the language of signs; and still more so to get rid of the importunities of another, who, fancying that he possessed the gift of tongues, urged his suit in German, French, English, and Italian. Another gentleman, an elderly man, whose dancing days were over, introduced himself and his singularly amiable looking wife; while a fourth discussed the gaieties of Manchester, which he had visited—probably in some peddling capacity. We were at first exceedingly annoyed (indeed so much so, as to think of making a retreat), at finding ourselves the object of general attention; but at last became reconciled to a

curiosity so benevolently exercised. I infer from it, that foreigners are rare here; the visitors are, I am told, chiefly residents of Frankfort, Mayence, and the surrounding towns.

All here is glare and bustle; every thing seems arranged for pleasurable purposes,—nothing for repose. I would as lieve spend the summer at Jack Straw's Castle on Hampstead Heath, or court the evening breezes in the willowy recesses of Eel-pie Island, as endure the heat and turmoil of Weisbaden in the month of August. Innumerable vehicles poured in this morning, freighted with holiday-folk, full dressed, and half roasted (for it has been gala-day with the sun), who might well have passed for importations all smoking hot from Deptford or Wapping. In the afternoon we saw, amongst at least thirty departures for the "Dog and Duck" places of evening resort, a machine not much larger than a cabriolet, go off with six adults and three stout children wedged into it. John Gilpin's equipage was a Hyde Park turn-out, compared with this domestic contrivance. A natural, an unconquerable antipathy to the routine of a watering-place may, perhaps, make me unjust to the merits of Weisbaden, now, I believe, looked upon as the most brilliant of the German Spas. I therefore

note down, in opposition to my own opinion, that of a clever and very elegant-minded woman, who told me at Paris that it was the most delightful place on earth. Indeed a *catalogue raisonné* of its attractions would read brilliantly. The splendour of the new town—the antiquities of the old—the efficacy of the baths—salubrity of the air—pleasantness of the country—vicinity of the Rhine, and liberal government of the Duke de Nassau, are elements eminently susceptible of guide-book inflation.

But its delights, such as they are, now lie behind us, and we are jogging along the Frankfort road, and fighting against a species of beggar common in this part of Germany; not a true country rag-and-porringer beggar, but a respectable-looking stout young man, with a pack or wallet, apparently crammed with books, on his back, and a roll of paper under his arm, looking like a poor student journeying onwards to his university, begging or battling his way, according to circumstances. These ambulating literati are importunate and determined, and want nothing but the cross-sticks and carbine to be as alarming to a timid traveller as Gil Blas' "espèce de soldat" was to him.

Not far from Weisbaden the Rhine opens handsomely, showing off its islands to advantage, and

displaying its clustering towns and villages with effective coquetry. Mayence, seen from the opposite bank, has the strong, heavy, turreted, and imposing air of the Rhenish towns in general. We crossed the bridge which unites it to Cassel, and stopped to admire the effect of a fine red light on the perforated towers of the cathedral. All that we saw of the town was characteristic and striking, and the brimful Rhine, sparkling in the sunbeams, and embracing its subject islands with a gentleness that does not always belong to its character, looked bright and beautiful. The old connexion between this town and St. Boniface (an English missionary and German saint, who arranged its hierarchy and turned its inhabitants from the delight of eating horseflesh) makes a kind of distant relationship between us. I did not know of the affinity till we had left it behind. As we returned over the long, long bridge, two girls, carrying small harps and profusely curled after the last Paris mode, passed us on their way to tempt fortune at Mayence. I never meet one of these wandering artists, so numerous in this country, without thinking of Whilelmeister's delectable apprenticeship; that incomprehensible farrago of bad taste, force, feeling, talent, and vulgarity.

Turning off from the Rhine, we met the quiet Maine, creeping sluggishly through pollard willows. A tame and perfectly uninteresting country as long as we had light to see it. Stopped as night came on at a farm-house inn, on the edge of a cock-and-hen village, and found a fat landlord, who, after communing a little with his avarice, asked us *(en conscience de cabaretier)* twenty francs for three miserable beds. We preferred continuing our route, late as it was, to submitting to so gross an imposition; so again setting forward, we arrived at Frankfort just as the clocks were striking twelve. The first hotel to which we drove was full; the second, full also; the third shut up, and every one asleep. We roused up three or four half-alive waiters, who soon arranged matters for us, and in ten minutes we found ourselves comfortably settled.

Took a sweep of the town the next morning, and returned favourably impressed by its handsome appearance. It is not rich in Gothic architecture, nor castellated or romantic like the towns of the Netherlands, or the Rhine; it is all white too, glaringly white, in its most showy and obvious parts; but it has at least one very fine street (the Zcil), and many magnificent houses. The quays too have a good effect; their heterogeneous

buildings give spirit and variety. But the gardens full of flowers, and walks full of shade, which enclose the town, constitute (to me) its principal charm. The Maine is here of no great force or dignity, but it is graceful. I can fancy this an agreeable town to live in; the houses vast, airy, and luxurious; the country fresh and flowery; the people (as it is said) urbane and hospitable; but for the eye and the imagination, a gloomy Spanish-looking town, with all its helps to antique recollections, is worth a dozen such cities as Frankfort. Not that it wants for peaked and turreted houses, unscraped and unvarnished, with the upper stories projecting a foot or two over each other, and an army of windows in the roof; nor for an antique huddling of dark streets, narrow gables, and ponderous masses, with the heavy stamp of the middle ages upon them. The bridge too, and the fountains, and many of the houses, exhibit grotesque specimens of old German sculpture; but the general effect is decidedly modern. A white, broad-daylight town, but very handsome in its way, and belted round with the garden-houses of the principal merchants,—many of them superb, looking as if they had been erected for a congress of princes. We visited one this morning, and in a garden pavilion saw Danneker's

exquisite Ariadne. A rose-coloured light falls through a window of stained glass on the figure of the nymph; this is intended, I suppose, to produce the effect of a warm life tint; but it is an affectation, and, I think, a failure. She sits, or rather reposes, on a panther, which, all brute as it is, seems to know how fair a thing it carries. The attitude is proud and graceful, full of the loftiness of youth and unrepressed hope. It is the yet beloved, the unforsaken Ariadne. Not the widowed one in her island of desolation; but she who gave the clue to Theseus, the Cretan princess in all the glory of her early beauty. She looks forward like an embodied hope; the head is exquisitely placed; the profile fine, swerving a little from the perfect Greek outline, but, perhaps, gaining in spirit and originality by the deviation. It may be objected against this remarkable work of art, that the panther is too small for the figure it sustains; and the marble stained and spotted. The first fault strikes the eye immediately on seeing one of the indifferent engravings frequently purchased here as recollections; in these the animal looks like a large dog, and the whole character of the group is changed, or effaced. But in contemplating the statue, the defect is scarcely visible. As to the marble, the sculptor was un-

questionably not fortunate in his block; but I had so often heard it compared to things unseemly, that I found its imperfections much less obvious than I had expected. Mr. Bethman, one of the Frankfort leviathans, who counts his wealth by millions, is the enviable possessor of this chef-d'œuvre of the German sculptor; for though executed at a very early period of Danneker's life, it still continues his master-piece: he has also a fine collection of casts, with which we amused ourselves for some time. Afterwards visited the Museum—a delightful Claude, and some pleasing Flemish and curious old German pictures; and amongst them the genealogical tree of the Virgin, and that of St. Dominick; both perfect in all their ramifications. A rich individual of Frankfort, named Steidhal, was the founder of this gallery; he bequeathed to it his collection of pictures, and a million of florins, for the purpose of purchasing others, and of sending young artists to pursue their studies at Rome. A gentleman, who seemed in authority, accompanied us through the rooms, pointing out, with great politeness, every thing worthy of observation. He lamented the neglected state of the arts at Frankfort—a city (it would seem) of powerfully rich merchants, who are not of the race of Medicis.

This is the birth-place of Goethe, and the scene of those early loves which he details with so much *naïf* conceitedness. Yet the atmosphere breathes more of ingots than of poetry, and I find myself forgetting Werther (a native too of this town) and Faust, and even the sweet Margaret, to inquire if such and such a mansion belongs to one of the Rothschilds, who being inseparably connected in my mind with the opulence and splendour of Frankfort, I am fancying the possessors of all the fine things here. This is abominable; so abominable, that I am half-inclined to efface it; but it is written, and moreover, it is true; so I shall let it remain, begging pardon of the illustrious Goethe, whom, notwithstanding my dereliction, I sincerely admire, and wishing that he who can call up agents from below and awake celestial voices,—who could create Mephistopheles and imagine Mignon,—alarm us by the weakness of virtue in Charlotte, or wring our hearts by the misery of error in Margaret, had been born amidst the mysterious depths of a lone Alpine forest, and not in the heart of a pounds-shillings-and-pence city, whose household gods wear crowns made of bank notes, and sing pæans to Plutus. Yet it has a feature, of which a poet might make something. What was once its Glacis is now a flower-garden.

I have seen nothing striking in the environs of this same prosperous town, though we ascended to a considerable height to look down upon them, except a long ridge of the Taunus mountains, and an agreeable continuity of garden cultivation, with a luxury of shade and flowers. We passed a monument * on our return, an odd, melancholy looking memorial, which greatly took my fancy. It is nothing more than a square base resting on a rock, with a helmet and some armour cast in bronze and of colossal dimensions, piled upon it. It is not remarkable as a work of art, nor beautiful as an object of attraction; but the dark unfilled helmet has something awful in it. The eye runs under it, almost expecting to meet an appalling visage, like the terrible Medicis of Michael Angelo. What simple means are sometimes employed, both by art and nature, to produce unspeakable effects; a single object, perhaps, without colouring or contrast, —a half-heard sound—a profound silence stirs up the soul when the most elaborate efforts fail to excite a warmer sentiment than that of approbation.

I begin to tire of orchards, villages, and corn-

* Erected to the memory of the Prince of Hesse Philipstahl, killed on the spot in 1792, in an engagement with the French.

fields, following each other in rapid and monotonous succession; we have had nothing else since we left Bingen. This kind of country is pleasing at first, from its pastoral colouring, its indications of life, and earnest of abundance, but fatigues at last by its sameness. Not so when the eye dwells on the dim and shapeless distance: thoughts that seem like recollections people the mind; we know not from whence they come,—we have not felt that they were there before, yet we receive them without surprise, as we do the dead who visit us in dreams. In such moments I often feel as if I had lived before this life, and that gleamings of that first state came over me.

Between Frankfort and Darmstadt, an almost hopeless stretch of flat country; potatoes and grain, and grain and potatoes to satiety. But there were some delicious interventions of beech groves, throwing their welcome shade across the road and blessing us with temporary freshness. Bare-footed women, and shepherds, who looked as they went swinging along in their wide skirted coats and careless three-cornered hats like the jolly soul in the bower who heads the first page of a song-book, were all that we met of life. The men were furnished with pipes, and jogged along involved in an atmosphere of tobacco. I have no objection to a

distant whiff (a very distant one); it sometimes counteracts worse odours; but this evening it comes between us and the balmy breath of heaven with most unpardonable audacity. A pipe and a draught of mineral-water, are luxuries indispensable to every class of society here. The last is taken apparently without the slightest reference to its particular properties. It is always pronounced good for something, and if not required as a cure, is used as a preventive.

CHAPTER VI.

DARMSTADT—THE BERGSTRASSE—HEIDLEBERG.

DARMSTADT, where we are just arrived, is indifferently situated. I long to find myself again amongst mountains; milk and honey countries have no charm for me; "*corn* delights not me, nor *apples* either." I love nature, dearly love her, when she throws off her embroidered slippers, and roams bare-footed over castellated rocks or lonely mountains; she is so bright and beautiful in her untamed state, with nothing but the morning sunbeams and the sweet light of evening to set her off, that when I see her with her heavy garland of wheat ears and her bouquet of apple blossoms, she seems to me like one who no longer fed upon the nectared dews of heaven, but had grown mundane and gone over to the flesh-pots.

And now to supper with what appetite we may. The good people here proposed that it should be

placed in a sort of tea-garden bower, which I knew by instinct smelt of beer and tobacco, and had the additional attraction of a sprightly party in an adjoining alcove, of which we had a satisfying glance *en passant;* but we preferred the quiet of a chamber, where we are very comfortably established.

I can say but little of Darmstadt, having neither seen the opera nor the picture gallery, nor the beautiful Herrengerten, nor any thing, in short, but its streets, which are broad, regular, and intermixed with gardens. It is a quiet, handsome, uninteresting town; a place where one might contrive to be very dull, though it has its pretensions, and high ones too. The opera is reckoned one of the finest in Germany; the orchestra (where the Duke is said to preside in person) perfection, but unluckily for us birds of passage, it is only open on Sundays. The Duke resides here entirely; he is now old and infirm, but appears to mix up with his ardour for dramatic music some military tendencies, and to love the reminiscences of war. Long before day-break I was awakened by the blast of a trumpet, and the rolling of drums; at five o'clock I looked out of my window, "pioneers and all" in movement; files of soldiers marching down the street, troops dispersing in the square,

and all showing by their dusty accoutrements that the morning exercises were already over.

Quitted Darmstadt at an early hour, ploughing our way through a heavy bed of sand, chequered by pine forests so extensive, that the atmosphere was impregnated with the odour of turpentine.

We are now in the Bergstrasse, and have a sweet stretch of undulating and wooded country screening us on one side, with castled crags as bold as Drachenfels, but no Rhine, and a tame distance spreading off on the other. Guide-books talk of towns and villages—cheerful, opulent, and commercial; but they are in reality poor places. Stopped at eight o'clock at Heppenheim, and breakfasted. Whilst we took our coffee, two ingenious artists presented themselves, and with many full-dress bows and infinite ceremony, begged leave to exhibit the acquirements of five miserable unfledged canary-birds; who, with half-shut eyes, and clinging wings that seemed to have lost the power even of fluttering, staggered about, balanced their wretched bodies on a cord, trundled a miniature wheel-barrow, and performed several other feats of equal interest, to which they had probably been trained by some process of torture. A general muster of ugly faces from the stable and the kitchen, headed by the host and hostess,

crowded into the room, straining their swarthy throats to obtain a good view of this disgusting exhibition, to which I took leave to put a speedy conclusion. It must be said to the honour of the rough audience, that a sentiment of pity seemed very generally excited by this barbarous display of power exercised over weakness.

A German air murmured on the piano in a soft but masterly way, brought us all crowding on the stairs to hear it more distinctly. The performer, a young man in a carter's frock, sat with his back to the half-open door, touching the instrument with flying fingers and an air of inspiration. I thought it might be Apollo, just stepped down to take a little kirchwasser with the host, or say civil things to the dairy-maids, and looked up to see if there was a hot cloud waiting for his divinity; but it was only a student from Heidleberg, in the favourite travelling dress.* A piano-forte always makes part of the furniture of a German inn; every one strums upon it. A girl, who had been a moment before peeling potatoes in the kitchen, has just played two or three waltzes at our request, and very prettily too, and then sung a popular air,

* The *blouse*,—literally, a carter's frock, of unbleached or blue linen, with a broad belt.

accompanied by a very clumsy Maritornes, who hummed a second in good taste and perfect tune. What the French call "le sentiment de la musique," without which skill is ineffective and a powerful voice a calamity, seems innate in the coarsest German. The heaviest features brighten into expression under its influence; all seem susceptible of the pleasure which is conveyed to the ear by a felicitous combination of sounds; and many, whose position in life puts the opportunity of musical instruction quite out of the question, give to the sweet and measured seriousness of their national songs and the wild originality of their mountain melodies, an expression of truth and feeling, that leaves nothing to be wished for by taste, or cavilled at by criticism.

Quitted Heppenheim at six in the evening, vainly flattering ourselves that by having remained stationary during the burning hours, we had ensured a cool drive to Heidleberg. But if any thing could be more intolerable than the blaze of the noon, it was the sirocco of the evening. The wind scorched as if it had passed over burning sands; every breath that we inhaled seemed full of fiery particles. I literally gasped, and for the first time in my life felt what it might be to respire the stifling simoon of the desert. Had it not been for the

spreading shade of some blessed walnut-trees that grew by the road-side, I think we must have discontinued our journey. Near to Weinheim, a fine horse lay dead under the plough,—it had just expired; yet women were digging and reaping in the fields bare-headed, and without any covering on their scorched feet. The men had the defence of their flapped beavers, — something like the spreading hats of our church dignitaries. The steep old town of Weinheim has sweet hills about it, and the usual accompaniment of a tower, with its dependent ruins. It has gardens too—not dust and ashes like the scorched crumbling things that we have been fretting at all the morning, but fresh and dewy, as if it were but just day-break. It was not difficult to trace the fostering hand of woman on their moist leaves; and though we could not touch, it was a positive recreation to look at them.

Much is said of the delicious things shut up within the hollows of the Bergstrasse mountains, of the forest scenery of the Melibocus, the highest of the range, and of the romance of colouring and story (ghost story too) that hangs upon its castles. We had but a running view of it, but caught, even in that slight way, some sweet vouchers for its hidden beauty. The ridge which forms the barrier

of the Bergstrasse, so strongly resembles, in its waving outline, its castles, and its general character, the shores of the Rhine, that had it not been for the wide spread of country to the right, I should have expected at every turn to have found the fair river flowing at its base.

At Heidleberg we came suddenly upon the Neckar, and blessed the delicious freshness of the breeze which passed over it, sweeping away the weight of hot air that had sat all day upon us like a night-mare. I looked out, but there was neither moon, or star, or crescent,—all was night: the mountains dark, the river dark, the bridge dark. In the midst of this general gloom, lights streamed from the open casements, and the white colossal statues on the bridge were just gleamingly visible. I go to bed longing for the morning, that I may see this beautiful Heidleberg, which, it is said, strangers always quit with regret, and wish to return to.

Blessed be the man who invented windows!—the traveller's best solace, and most amusing hint-book. It is easy to say, "look out of a window! —what a vulgar occupation!" So it is in London or Paris, and an unmeaning one too; but in an absolutely foreign country, where every thing seems odd, or new, or original, it is a very entertaining,

and I am not sure that I may not say, a very intellectual recreation.

Be this as it may, I have amused myself for the last ten minutes in looking at the students, a new feature to me, (that is, in their home-fastnesses) passing from their lodgings to the learned halls, where they may, or may not, as inclination directs, dive into the mysteries of science, rifle the hoarded treasures of knowledge, dissipate in the beckoning paths of gayer study (for study has its flowers, and very bright ones too), or ruminate the liberation of their country,—a theme of deep and fiery interest in a German university, but soon forgotten in the more plodding speculations of ordinary life.

An eye of defiance, an exulting step, an intrepid carriage, are the marks and tokens of a German student. This audacious bearing is strengthened and set off by the open collar, short frock (generally of Lincoln green, and of Robin Hood's own cut), small casquette, the point pressing flatly on the forehead, and hair cropped like Giotto's or Cimabue's apostles, floating or bristling at each side of the face. These "chartered libertines," for such they are during their collegiate life, run a course of unbridled riot, mastering the quieter classes of society by their force and number: to be formidable seems their point of honour and they sustain

it fiercely. Many of these swaggerers are certainly of an age to have long since finished their studies, and others curl their angry mustachios as if they had already smelt powder, and were "fit for treason, stratagem, or strife." Indeed, their general appearance is more that of lawless desperadoes, robbers of the cave and forest, than of dwellers in the quiet groves of Academus; and yet these same students, when absent from their universities, appear to be persons of peaceful and respectable habits, earnest in the pursuit of knowledge, and often battling courageously for its attainment in the very teeth of poverty and its concomitant disadvantages.

Every tour reader falls in love with the traveller's Heidleberg; is the real one as beautiful? I ask myself this question, and answer doubtingly, —perhaps I have heard too much of it; and yet it is very pretty, or rather its situation is so; for the town itself is uninteresting. The Neckar is, indeed, far inferior to the full and rapid Rhine; but it has its own character of graceful beauty, and a landscape round it full of amenity and freshness; and of dignity too,—the dignity of rocks and ruins, and mountains, softened but not tamed down by the woods that hang upon them. We began our rambles this evening by the Wolfsbrunnen, a fountain not worth looking at, but with an air of quiet

pleasantness about it. A tradition of a woman strangled by a wolf is attached to this spot; and the story goes, that a spring of the purest water bubbled up suddenly just where her body was found. I asked our guide when this miracle had taken place. "O, very long ago,"—he did not know when, but "avant la religion." Caught some sweet gleams as we crossed the mountain path that leads from Wolfsbrunnen to the ruins of the famous castle. Green steeps shooting precipitously, or sweeping gracefully downwards from the road, lose themselves in hollows full of walnut-trees. Above and around rise mountains hung with woods, or rocks rent and shivered, mingling their fantastic forms with the fresh vegetation of the young trees which are fostered in their crevices.

The gardens are delightful. Our guide said they possessed many rare plants, and called them botanical, oddly enough, I thought; they are beautiful, but probably resemble the hanging gardens of Babylon quite as much as the Jardin des Plantes. The coolest spots were occupied by groupes of students indulging convivially, but tranquilly. Others, alone or in small parties, sauntered about, or lay listlessly along the benches, aiding their reveries by the inspiring fumes of their beloved tobacco inhaled through yard-long pipes,—an im-

plement of luxury which even the youngest seem to possess. I wonder did Werther smoke; but of course he did, and Charlotte probably smelt of bread and butter. How easily is a romantic illusion destroyed, when its fanciful accessories are withdrawn. I used to love Werther and read it with rapture, until I found that he was not Werther, but young Jerusalem*—old Jerusalem's son: from that moment I could not fancy him any thing but a Frankfort cit—a sentimental adorer of milliners' apprentices. And yet it is a sweet and passionate book; but notwithstanding all that the gentle Capulet has said (and how deliciously!) there is something in a name, and Rousseau knew it when he chose the soft sounding ones of Clarens and Meillerie, the most uninviting village and least romantic rocks in the whole stretch of that beautiful region which he has selected for the scene of his story.

But my students are still smoking under the trees, and I must go back to them, and to the lawns and terraces of which I have only had a peep. The views are varied and delightful over the mountains and over the plains, with the Neckar gliding below and the Rhine rolling in the distance.

* Vide Memoirs of Goethe.

A lawn, called the Salle de Danse, shaded by a leafy canopy of chestnuts, has a fine look on some very fine things; the ruins of the castle are full in view, but a side point gives their peculiar character more advantageously. As ruins they are very remarkable, and some shattered fragments very Roman; but they are not altogether after my own heart. There is certainly no penury of decoration, but there is an absence of that sedate tone, that gray sobriety of colouring, which belongs to, and becomes the past,—indeed the centre building rather offends the eye by its too close approximation to a modern house. The powder magazine seems to have been rent from top to bottom by some violent elemental concussion; one half lies prostrate, but still preserving its original form; the firmly cemented stones have resisted the shock, and seem as solid as the rock they rest upon: the other half is still upright; its arched interior laid open, and looking like a Roman cemetery,—an illusion aided by the burnt-red hue of the stone, which brings it very near, in effect of colouring, to the everlasting brick-work of old Rome.

The wreck of the interior retains much of the rude splendour of its age, and something of the more modern elegance of its once courtly destination. Some of the chambers have been converted,

by the caprice of time, into rude gardens; others are draperied with the fresh verdure of innumerable wild plants, that shoot out through the fissures, or are suspended from the roofless walls. I always find abundant interest in these old memorials that point backward to the past; but I have seen a single arch of the pure religious gothic, with its ivy tracery and its stone frame work, through which the eye runs into the long perspective, that has touched me infinitely more, heart and fancy, than all this gorgeous emblazonment, this encumbering sculpture. I prefer the stern feudalities of the Rhine, or the spectre tower of the Bergstrasse. And yet the rich, though overcharged remains of the Rittersal, or hall of the knights, now reduced to a perforated screen, lavishly and most elaborately ornamented; the powder magazine, the tower of Elizabeth,* and the portals and other fragments scattered over the gardens, and curtained with clematis and the long branches of the nut-tree, are full of curious detail and picturesque effect.

We have, of course, paid the indispensable visit to the tun; but I have forgotten its dimensions and its story too, though I heard it but yesterday. For

* Elizabeth, daughter of our James I., who married the Elector Palatine.

while our informer was explaining its origin and uses, my attention was engaged by the appearance of a courtly antique, in a large French night-cap, with a work-bag on her arm and an air of stately urbanity, who descended at the same moment from a shabby equipage in the court-yard; she was a princess, our cicerone said, and the gentleman, who was in waiting to offer her the support of his arm, high chamberlain, but I forget to whom. The whole scene brought the good old chanoinesse and her buckramed apostate at once to my mind's eye, and with them a crowd of delicious recollections; so thinking of Caroline de Litchfield, and Lindorf, and Walstein, I forgot the tun. It was a jolly soul, however, who imagined it,—twin brother of the heart to the immortal Falstaff; one who, like him, never probably babbled of green fields till the last gasp, and deserved the Anacreontic honour of being choked by a grape-stone. "If sack and sugar be a sin, God help the wicked!"

We are assured that the gardens are never closed, and that the students, when tired of wine-house convivialities, retire to pass the night in their shady recesses, that is, whenever a sultry atmosphere makes a couch *à la belle étoile* agreeable. The existence of a license so liable to abuse, within the very precincts of a university, seems almost incre-

dible. But these bold Burschens are evidently of opinion, that it is one thing to hear a learned doctor lecture on philosophy and jurisprudence, and another to submit their moral conduct to his authority.

Joined the table d'hôte party to-day upon principle, wishing to see a little of the manners of Heidleberg, though it must be confessed that its usually mixed society can afford but an imperfect criterion. However, if it does not give us the Corinthian capitals, it at least offers flying sketches of men and manners, and those are all that a stranger can ever hope to seize. In fact, we birds of passage can form no positive judgment on any point susceptible of fluctuation. We look at society through a kaleidoscope ; a jog to the right or to the left scatters our materials just as we are preparing to sketch from them, and no twisting or turning can bring back the same pattern again ; while stationary people fix their microscopes firmly, fasten their subject before them, and dissect it at their leisure. After all, our grand error is, that instead of looking through our own eyes and judging by our own impressions, we run to our books of reference, pinning our faith on other men's sleeves, without considering how time and season, sunshine and rain, bile and blue

devils, alter matters. It is like judging of a nation by an individual, a thing so often done dictatorially and senselessly too. "He's knight o' the shire, and represents them all," is a common presumption, and always goes down. But the table d'hôte—I had quite forgotten it—very barren to-day,—nothing either agreeable or ludicrous. A student with the upper lip fiercely whiskered, a perfect Orson, but affecting champagne and a clean shirt collar, seized a chair (of which he was, I suppose, daily proprietor) just taken by L—— as being the nearest and unoccupied, roaring out in a voice of thunder "das ist mein." I never saw a bearing of such vulgar insolence. The rest of the company seemed equally *urbane*, with the exception of a Dutch lady and her husband, strangers like ourselves, who seemed very kindly disposed. The lady expatiated with rapture on her hothouses, her exotics, her early peas and late strawberries, and all the luxurious produce of her garden near the Hague. The good man looked as if his mind was on his invoices or his argosies, or perhaps on the herring fishery; but he made no display, and, I believe, never spoke but once, and then to express his astonishment at Gertrude's continence in withstanding the double temptation of lemon pudding and cherry tart.

We were not a little surprised to hear the Bergstrasse talked of to-day as people talk at Rome of the Abruzzi, or Calabria, or any other lurking-place of the mountain robber. Fortunately we knew nothing of all this when we journeyed through it last night, fearing no enemy but the suffocating sirocco, and little thinking that danger lurked in a scene so soft and pastoral,—that is, palpable danger; for we had heard of the spectre huntsman, and the clattering of arms in the air, and the wild voices crying war and murder. But on a post road, with the hum of man in one's ear, those unreal mockeries are not very awful. In a lonely forest, indeed, and at night! with a cold ghastly moon-beam struggling through the lurid clouds and making darkness visible—but it is idle to talk of such things; the heart will sometimes quail, even when reason stands bolt upright and cries out "shame!"

At noon and during the hot hours, the streets of Heidleberg are still as death; no sound of wheels, no soul stirring, except the few whose occupations imperatively deny them the luxury of repose. But with the shadows of evening come life and motion; the houses give up their inmates; the streets swarm; girls with pails and pitchers group round the fountains; and frequently an

attitude or an expression of head is caught that might form a study for an artist. We are never weary of admiring the natural coiffure of the women; such magnificent hair! and every market-girl braiding and arranging her profuse and glossy tresses with the elegant precision of a Parisian coquette, and with more becoming simplicity. This beautiful ornament apart, the females are less handsome than one might expect to find them, judging by the remarkable loveliness of the children, who are really charming—not chubby brats, like our fine cottage broods, but fair and delicate, with bright blue eyes and looks as gentle as Guido's angels. I shall not speedily forget a little girl that we saw filling her shoe with dust, in a village of the Bergstrasse, a gypsy beauty (this is not, however, the prevailing cast), with flashing eyes; but the sun, to which they are all exposed, soon tarnishes the lustre of their naturally fine complexions.

The Prussian students had a fête this evening, in honour of their king's birth-day. We saw an illuminated barge pass along the river and heard the rolling of the bombs prolonged by the mountain echoes; but it was too late, and we were too weary to pursue their festivities. This morning L—— called on the Countess —— and found her on

the wing for the country; she spoke of Heidleberg as a quiet town, with little society and no public places; possessing only the attractions of its peculiar situation and beautiful environs.

Dined alone to-day (August 5th), and heard such sounds ascending from the table d'hôte as made us almost regret having done so. Two female voices executed some airs from Weber's "Preciosa," with a degree of taste and feeling far above what might have been expected from itine rant performers. One was a rare contrálto, rich, full, round, and perfectly true; the other a soprano, sweet, but feeble; the first had occasionally a passionate burst, and a low and long sustained note that awakened a recollection of Pasta. Street music is much better in Germany than in Italy. I never heard any thing in that land of melody (speaking merely of wandering musicians), that could be compared with the sweet singers of Heidleberg, except, perhaps, a serenade at Pisa, charming in itself, and charming in its accompaniments—an Italian moonlight and the lingering Arno, great setters-off of song; but there was no voice like the fine one which surprised us so agreeably this afternoon.

I had never either read or heard of the valley of the Neckar, so it came upon me like a sunbeam.

It is a baby stream compared with the "abounding and exulting" Rhine; but I recollect few spots where the villages hang about more happily, or the folding hills are broken into more varied or graceful forms. At Neckargumen (or some name of that sound), we crossed the river, and following the course of a very bad road, came to the little town of Neckarsteinah, where we left our carriage and ascended to a castle in a most uninteresting state of preservation, though with small remains of its feudal dignity, and all the stamp and odour of an alehouse into which it has been unreverentially converted. But the ridge on which it stands looks back upon a pastoral valley, green, quiet, and shady; and forward on the river, which here forms a sweeping crescent, inclosing within its hollow a round green hill, encircled at its highest point by a little town and what were once its fortifications. The bow of the river is well framed in by dark wild hills, counting four castles (two in very mellow keeping) within their bend.

This is a favourite haunt of the students, who appear to select the scenes of their festive enjoyments with as nice a taste as the monks of old did the site of a monastery. Whenever we see an airy height shaded by the sweeping foliage of a few large trees, or a dell watered by a living rill, or a

bench in a fine point of view, or a cool window through which the light comes chequered and obscured by a trellis of vines or wild clematis, we are sure to find an occupied table or a recumbent figure, or to hear that "ces Messieurs" visit it frequently.

Our lacquais, who had just emptied a stone pitcher of its sour contents and got into a kind o. beer paradise, led us from room to room (all about as well worth seeing, in an historical or characteristic point of view, as any of the *estaminets* or *guingettes* in the outlets of Paris), rodomontading about the knights of Malta, who had flourished here (according to his favourite phrase) "avant la religion," until we ran out in despair, and found the clouds blackening and the winds rising portentously. We sat down on a stone in the village to wait for the carriage, when a gentlewoman passing homewards accosted us, and pointing to the sky and then to her house, made us understand that a storm was gathering, and that she offered us the shelter of her roof. She repeated her solicitations with courteous urgency, but we declined her proffered kindness, fearing to miss the carriage. The good Samaritan was scarcely out of sight, when the skies opened and sent down thunder, lightning, and rain upon us; we took refuge in a decent kind

of cottage, possessing the comfort of well glazed windows and the luxury of curtains and a clock. The good natured people received us kindly, and laughed heartily at our awkward attempts to make ourselves understood. The master was absent; he was, his wife told us, a sheepman, equivalent, as well as we could make out, to our shepherd. The women were homely souls, with the fresh coifs and grave vulgarity of Bergham and Ostade, but shining again with cleanliness and full of good humour. Remarked nothing here but the red and white stone so much used in public buildings in the towns of the Rhine and its neighbourhood, and which is abundantly supplied from the quarries in this vicinity. It has a showy effect, but looks something like painted wood when seen from a distance.

The storm had retarded us so long, that we could but just get over the worst part of the road and cross the ferry, before night came on. We could distinguish nothing of the opposite shore but the headlong shadows that darkened the river, leaving only a narrow line of silvery light close to the bank; and now and then, where the hills sink a little, a faint red ray reflected from their summits on a cottage window, or a small creek with a cluster of boats moored in its quiet haven. A vessel at

anchor, with a moon-beam or a last day-streak lingering on it, fills the soul with an image of repose, to which the contrast of its motionless state, with the associations of movement, enterprise, and danger that hang upon it, gives a mental and touching colouring.

No Flemish tinting in the market groupes to-day; all the women in dingy blues; the church in the centre of the market-place, stuck round with little shops wedged in between the buttresses—doors shut;—so looked at the women on the outside—lank and sinewy—no beauty. Ordered a pair of sugar-tongs in the shape of a stork, as a memorial of the Rhine, and of those unhappy favourites, lone dwellers amidst cabbage-stumps and currant-bushes. Dined again in our apartment, to the obvious dissatisfaction of both master and waiters, who, I am sure, think us very stiff, difficult, unsociable sort of people.

Mounted again to the castle after dinner, and arrived just in time to avoid another explosion of the elements. Took refuge in the apartment of an artist, the inhabitant of a chamber still possessing a roof; he had toiled most laboriously upon the ruins during sixteen years, and had made drawings from them without end, working with most exemplary drudgery on the minute details of every

mutilated arch and imperfect entablature; and with the help of a perspective eked out by one friend, and a mellow tint furnished by another, has contrived to make out a series of engravings, coloured and uncoloured, passably uninteresting, though, perhaps, curious from their accuracy to any one taken by the subject. This very hard working artist is a Frenchman, an emigrant, and (as he informed us) a man of family, who cultivates his very thread-paper talent professionally. Nothing could be more polite than his reception, or more hopeless than the attempt to get any information from him. The ruins! the ruins! the source of his enthusiasm, the object of his idolatry, seemed to have turned his brain. He ran on with an overwhelming volubility, heedless of our inquiries and evidently considering a simple question pitched below the key of rapturous wonder, as beneath the attention of absorbed and isolated man. O! how we longed to leave him "alone with his glory!" At first we had hopes that he would soon have talked himself breathless: vain expectation!—he was seasoned into a long-windedness that threw us into despair. In my life I never felt so exhausted as by the mere act of listening; at length the rain ceased, and taking advantage of a "hem," we made our escape, pursued into the court by the

indefatigable draughtsman crying out, "Regardez, Monsieur, regardez ces enfans,—a-t-on jamais rien vu de plus délicieux; et ce beau morceau,—et cette tête si pleine d'expression—et cette frise—et cette——;" we hurried off before he could finish his sentence, regained the terrace, and found the repose of nature inappreciable.

This evening we had a serenade in honour of a bride just brought home; good German music, very well executed. Theatrical exhibitions are prohibited at Heidleberg, as dangerous incentives to political excitement, too easily produced in a German university, for the safety or promotion of its ostensible and more peaceful interests. The fearless, lawless air of a German student bespeaks a man who dreams of equality of station and unlimited license, and who will bluster about his rights and expectancies boldly and fiercely, at least while the hey-day of youth lasts. His mind is like his dress, manly and fanciful, but the black cravated student of the *pays latin** shows in his thoughtful eye and abstracted yet ardent look, the spirit that never dies, the absorbing hope which clings to the heart through life, and never loses sight of the indemnifying moment. Perhaps the cause

* The academic quarter of Paris.

of an observation frequently made, that a German youth on quitting college soon forgets the day-dream of liberty, the projected efforts of patriotism which have amused his boyhood, and quietly settles into the peaceful subject of some petty prince, while a Frenchman who has once taken a political bias, rarely sobers down into the pliant and contented citizen of a government inimical to his early opinions and feelings, may be traced to the different positions of their respective countries. The one, a member of a vast empire divided into many states, more or less powerful, can never hope to see the different portions of his variously ruled country united under one enlightened and paternal system of government, while from the still unpartitioned state of France, every Frenchman looks to one central point, from which a constitution, inspired by the love of liberty and matured by wisdom,—a constitution, affording equal protection and equal advantages to all, may emanate.

CHAPTER VII.

HEIDLEBERG — MANHEIM — SCHWITZENGEN — ROYAL GARDENS—CARLSRUHE—BADEN-BADEN.

NOTHING interests from Heidleberg to Manheim, after the glance back upon the town at the distance of perhaps a mile, from whence it looked, with its mellow mountain back-ground, like a rich Italian landscape, with all the warm vapoury tinting of those beautiful bits with which the old masters loved to fill up their spare corners. After that, a flat tame country—flax, maize, and tobacco; but the Neckar sometimes in view, and the mountains always.

Manheim is a rule and compass town; clean, light, and regular. Respectable streets, intersecting each other at right angles, wide promenades shaded with acacias, very cool and, I dare say, very agreeable; in short, a town which, when first beheld, provokes extasies, but which, like every thing that lays itself open to the eye at once, is, to

me at least, perfectly uninteresting. Nothing to imagine, nothing to hang a conjecture upon,—every thing as clear as day-light,—not one tenement that looks as if time had discoloured, or tradition rested on it. All the vices of bad taste, gloom, heaviness, and incongruity are preferable (if there be character about them) to this first-rate mediocrity.

Our host of the Cour Palatine, who had been in England some six-and-thirty years ago, and still retains a delightful dreamy recollection of London and its attractions, took to us so violently, that we had some difficulty in disengaging ourselves from his civilities. His carriage, his horses, all his possessions, in short, were at our service,—not spread out in the way of trade, but proffered in that of friendship. So much kindness was almost irresistible; but we held out against it, and even against the superadded temptation of the "Gazza Ladra," announced for this evening. There is no singer of reputation just now at Manheim; but a Madame Schutz, from Vienna, comes out to-morrow, preceded by prodigious trumpeting.

Walked after dinner in the palace gardens, agreeably laid out in the English taste. The building suffered much in the bombardment of —— (I have forgotten the year); cannon balls are

no respecters of sweet sounds, and the walls of the Salle de l'Opéra, which formed one of its wings, were battered to pieces. It is very spacious and very red, spreading heavily over a large extent of ground. At present the Grand Duchess is absent, and every thing is shut up. This interesting princess is chief idol here; her kindness of heart, her affability, her charming manners, and anxiety to make her court agreeable to strangers, are inexhaustible topics of discourse. The name of Stephanie (as she is familiarly called) is always pronounced in a tone of affection, and followed by a laudatory exclamation; her affinity to Napoleon does not certainly deteriorate the impression made by her gracefulness and amiability on a people, who give to his memory the allegiance of the heart.

Looked in, as we returned, at a fine church theatrically decorated, and heard a good organ and some passable chaunting; the people coming and going with an unedified air; neither the rapt though transient feeling of devotion visible in Italy, nor the sober unexcursive piety of an English congregation.

I should not like to live at Manheim; I have said this to myself ten times at least since I have been here, yet our good lady of the Hague (at

Heidleberg) thought it the only place "hors de la Hollande," in which life could be properly enjoyed. "Every one," she added, "who had ever been there agreed in this opinion." I dare say its cleanliness and regularity may take a Dutch fancy, and she probably liked it for the very reason that I do not,—for the absence of broken outlines, mouldering dignity, nooks, zig-zags, rusty tints, and fanciful architecture.

I stood in the middle of the Piazza del Castello, at Turin, (one of the handsomest cities in Europe in its way) and looked round at the long and regular streets, diverging like radii from one central point, and each terminating in a perspective of the country, that positively tells you you have seen every thing. It was like a bolt drawn on the imagination. There was an end put at once to curiosity and excitement, to diving and exploring; no digging in the rubbish of tradition, or cheating the mind with conjecture. Yet Turin is reckoned (and really is) a beautiful town, but it does not affect the imagination, and that after all is the secret. Our young Englishmen, who finish a Geneva or Hofwyll education by a winter at Manheim, and an access to the parties of the Grand Duchess (a kind of court finish,) are always greatly taken with it; but this is easily accounted for:

they are noticed, and *probably* fall in love, for the first time; two circumstances eminently calculated to awaken kindly feelings and tender reminiscences. —But I have just discovered that I am confounding the town with the society, of which I know nothing but a favourable *on dit*.

An avenue of fruit trees and stately poplars to Schwitzengen, where the Grand Duke has a dingy palace, and pleasure gardens said to be the finest in their way in Germany. The poplars are magnificent; but I don't love the tree, except when it breaks the too great roundness or sameness of other trees, and then two or three disengaged gracefully from the mass and defined like leafy pyramids on a clear blue sky, have a fine effect. But when planted in straight lines, the perspective is too cold and architectural, and the formal and upright trunk never seems to me to harmonize with the light wavering leaf.

This old man of Baden has some very clever things belonging to him. Indeed these puny potentates, over whose dominions a traveller going post may pass at the rate of two or three principalities in a morning, are nine times in ten better lodged than our Kaiser; but this allows us the pleasure of saying, when we roam over foreign palaces, that their magnificence is the evidence of

despotism, and often have I said it with pride in France, when our brick houses in St. James's Park* have been sneered at. It is only the absolute monarch who can erect the palace which remains to dazzle future ages.

Any prince, however, may spoil a good thing; and when we stumble upon one who does not utterly discard nature, or who, neglecting her, still knows how to ennoble art and give dignity to her frippery, we are bound to laud him suitably. He who refrains from spreading brick arches over froggy pools, and planting belvideres on the edge of a dusty stage-coach road, when he has the power of doing so, deserves a note of approbation. But there is such a strange and strong propensity to counteract nature in the system of ornamental gardening on the continent, such a gold leaf and quincunx tendency even in her own beautiful Switzerland, or softer Italy, that the meed is not often claimed.

It would seem that of all the arts, that of landscape gardening is the slowest to speak to the eye or mind; how many are capable of admiring, or

* Alas! we have now a white house in that same park, which, by the force of contrast, turns the mellow brickwork of old St. James's into picture.

more, of appreciating a statue or a picture, who still adhere to the coat of arms, or Turkey carpet imitated in coloured pebbles, or the forlorn tree clipped into good behaviour. The proof of this is met with at every step in Italy.

But I will not quarrel with the gardens of Schwitzengen; they are in the Versailles style, and though inferior in splendour to that gorgeous, indeed matchless specimen of false taste and arid magnificence, have unquestionably considerable beauty of a certain kind; and if this stiff, crowded, and highly ornamented style be in place any where, it is when it forms the garniture of a palace which it may, perhaps, become, as a hoop and court lappets suit the etiquette of a drawing-room presentation. The great defect here is a perfectly flat surface; the charm, freshness and abundant shade. Trellised alcoves, covered with the thick foliage of some American plant, emulate the leafy monument of Napoleon's gallantry and tenderness at Compiègne; and baths, jets d'eau, theatres, temples, Roman tombs, Turkish mosques, &c., and again &c., come thronging on so rapidly, that in a walk of nearly three hours we could not get a moment's breathing-time, our inexorable cicerone would not spare us a single lion. A long forest vista closed by a mountain (a piece of the Vosges), distant

enough to have the right blue tint upon it, was, I thought, the best of the contrivances. But there are some good things besides, and amongst them a Pan, an "everlasting Pan," not "knit with the graces," but piping on a rock with a very classical and sylvan air, that makes one think of nymphs, and fawns, and all the old love affairs of the glades and forests; and a temple of Apollo, with the light of the setting sun falling on it behind, giving a detached and aerial look to the statue and the temple: while the rock on which it stands, and the issuing stream, are thrown into deep shade, that has much of the colouring of antique fable about it.

Slept at Schwitzengen. At a very early hour this morning the cowherd blew his horn, and assembling the cattle of the village (pigs included), drove them on before him to their general pasture: a multitude of geese followed. This community of benefits is usual in a German village; it is droll enough to see the animals returning home at the fall of the evening in companies (the pigs foremost, and always in full trot), and dropping off as they pass along, each to its well-known shed or snug litter.

This morning (August 8th) to Carlsruhe, partly through a bed of sand. A half-starved vegetation, struggling against the penalties of nature,

interludes of wood, and, in a vapoury distance, a superb chain of mountains finely broken down, and now and then a tower distinctly thrown out from the soft gray sky. I cannot talk of what I feel when I look at distant mountains; I never have found words that were of any use to me; but if I could choose a spot not to rave about, but to live upon, I think I should care but little about the immediate scene; a southern terrace for December and a few spreading trees for July, would suffice. But I should insist upon a long withdrawing mountain-ridge, fading into the bluish haze that effaces all details, yet leaves the waving outline distinctly, but gently, detached from its skyey back ground. If the stars are the poetry of heaven, mountains are the poetry of the earth; they are full of dreams and visions, of bright and sorrowful imaginings. We grow familiar with trees, and streams, and flowers,—and familiarity is apt to weaken reverence; but we take off our hats to mountains who are the grand lamas of nature, all the more powerful in their effect on the mind for the mystery which surrounds them.

Carlsruhe, partly embedded in the Hartz forest, is a handsome, well-built, ageeable looking town, with that air of decorum and unprogressing stillness which characterises the German residencies.

Is this the Hartz forest of Faust and his familiar devil, that wicked prompter of evil deeds and sal-volatile to sin, Mephistopheles? Is this the mysterious scene of that deadly dream—that awful May-day eve, when the infernal spirits wove the dreadful woof of Margaret's destiny, and witches rode on the clouds and laughed hellishly as the red shroud took form and substance? Poor Margaret! How beautiful Retzsch has made her, both in her innocence and in her wretchedness. I thought of her all the time we staid at Carlsruhe, and was glad to remember that chorus of celestial voices, that sign and seal of pardon to the sinner, but for which her sad story would press too heavily on the heart. But whether this is the identical forest, I know not; I am ashamed to betray my ignorance by asking the question; and if I did do so, a thousand to one if the person to whom I might chance to address myself could answer it satisfactorily. At all events, it is the residence of the Grand Duke of Baden, with all the outward and visible signs of a court upon it. Palace, castle, gallery, opera, museum—all within its forest ring-fence; and, of course, its cabinet intrigues, and its drawing-room ones too; its court circle, and its *bourgeoisie* (with a gulph between that even love itself rarely overleaps); its rivalries and heart burnings, monoto-

nous gaieties and calculated pleasures, like finer places in its way. But it is, for the sake of its wild hills and untamed forest, worth twenty Manheims. Some one cries out, "but Manheim has the Rhine!" True, but you must take a walk to see it; while the friendly forest looks in upon you everywhere, pleasing at once the lazy body and the wandering mind.

We have not seen any of the raree shows of Carlsruhe, nor did we much regret our want of leisure. Time spent in sight-seeing, is so often time thrown away; heat and fatigue endured, and hours (of which travellers have in general too few) lost in running after pictures that have often only the comparative merit of being less bad than others which hang near them; or in looking at imperfect collections of stuffed birds or dried butterflies, eked out with branches of coral, the rib of a whale, or the tusk of an elephant.

The cottages, in this duchy of Baden, have a great air of comfort about them; and their inhabitants a pretty fashion of training the vine, which constitutes the ornament of their dwellings, over a projecting frame, so as to form a canopy of thick and tufted foliage, which, with the aid of a large pear or walnut-tree planted near to the windows, gives them both freshness and beauty.

Changed horses at Ettlingen,—once a Roman settlement, now a poor place. Rastadt too, of congress memory, is very insignificant. As we passed along the edge of a forest, a group of young men, who were reposing under the shade of some spreading trees with their satchels beside them, started up and followed our carriage with all the whining cant of stark errant, downright beggars, though their dress and air bespoke them of a more than decent,—a respectable class of society. I am not quite certain that this alms-asking may not be done in sport; a kind of Gil Blas masquerade to raise the wind, or mystify the ignorant; but it has too much the air of positive mendicity, not to be hurtful in the eye of a stranger to the preconceived idea of German manliness and independence.*

A continuity of hills to Baden, which seems prettily shut in amidst wooded heights. On one of these hangs a castle, a burnt looking ruin, in excellent keeping with its sylvan accompaniments.

* The meaning of this custom has since been explained to me. Young men who have served their time to a trade which they have not funds to exercise, are privileged by ancient usage to take out a kind of begging license, and quitting their homes, set out to (what they call) see the world. When they enter a town, they put on their best clothes and go about from house to house, knocking boldly

August 9th. I feel ashamed to have used the word pretty;—the environs of Baden are quite beautiful. The old castle to which we were tugged up yesterday, is full of romantic and picturesque interest. The forest which hems it in, and finds its way even into its arched recesses, makes one think of that dear "As you like it," that always comes upon the mind like a beautiful dream of childhood—a daybreak dream, with the song of birds and the breath of flowers in it. The sweet effects of lights producing wild shadowy accidents, the casual circumstances of colouring, the rough vegetation, were all in harmony with the feelings which the fragments of the past awaken. So was not the riotous mirth of the gay groupes assembled within its venerable enclosure—shrill tittering, sudden screams, the loud shout, the answering holla, gave boisterous assurance that all within the ruins were not pilgrims of nature,—at least of inanimate nature. The festivity of a Paris barrier-garden is straight-

at the doors, and receiving alms wherever they apply for them. At Lucerne I have often watched the movements of these *especial beggars*, and have never seen their demand refused. No disgrace whatever attaches to this mode of creating a fund; on the contrary, it is reckoned an honourable way of visiting foreign parts, and poor students, as well as poor artisans, take advantage of it.

laced decorum compared with the afternoon orgies of the Altoss Schloss. The drinking song in Der Freyschutz, the Yagar chorus, and the Pescatore were heard at intervals, drowning the loud laugh and the rattling of glasses; then with the approaching twilight came girls running down the hill, with their noisy men after them, sliding and screaming, gabbling French, mouthing German, and shouting to their Frederichs (all the men here, I think, are Frederichs), till the dream of imagination had passed away and left the mind full of vulgar realities, of pipes and kirchswasser, sour wine and low flirtations.

From the summit of the castle hill, a wide spread of country, watered by the Rhine, stretches out before the eye, but the home-scenery is the charm of Baden. Its castles, convents, cottages, are all dropped just where a painter would have placed them. The interior of the town is steep and dull, but the houses and gardens that hang about it are charming. Went in the evening to the Conversation-Haus, here the focus of pleasure, and the same kind of thing which, under the various names of Redoute, Cassino, &c., is common to all the towns of baths and idlers from Spa onward to the mountains of the Black Forest. Pleasure-gardens, fine saloons, an excellent *res-*

taurant, and the fatal tables. There was no dancing, (Sunday is the ball night); but the usual business was going forward,—roulette was in full activity. Ladies, and I regret to say, English ladies, were deeply engaged in play. I could not see, without a painful feeling, my countrywomen, —persons too whose appearance denoted a certain position in society, herding at a common table in a public gaming room, with the chance rabble, decorated or thread-bare, dupes or sharpers, of which such assemblies must be composed, and doing so under the influence of a sordid excitement that not only blunts the fine edge of moral feeling, but at once breaks down the graceful barrier, within which natural delicacy and habitual decorum has fenced in woman.

In one of the adjoining saloons we found several parties supping at separate tables; we followed their example, and afterwards did—what I fear could not be done with impunity at an English watering-place of the Baden description,—walked home at half-past ten, through an unlighted, uninhabited, and lonely path-way, half a mile long, without suffering the slightest molestation, or hearing even an unquiet sound.

Those who can afford to fling about hours, may throw one away upon the Jagdhaus; but we

rather regretted having done so. An abdicated hunting lodge on a green platform, with a few fine old trees about it, is a delightful thing for a pic nic, but mere every day work in point of attraction, where so many objects of interest are within reach. It has a talked-of view; one of wide extent, with the sinuous Rhine rolling along gracefully; but the old castle has the same, or better. Every stranger, however, (according to our guide) visits the Jagdhaus; indeed, who could resist the idea of a hunter's hut shaped in the form of St. Hubert's cross, and dropped down in the middle of a (probably) haunted forest?—not I, for one. There was magic and poetry, spells and incantations in the very sound of it. Had the spot favoured the illusion, I should have leaned upon my elbows and thought of the converted hunter, and the miraculous stag; and, I am afraid, of Charles Dix too (who always comes to my mind as the identical St. Hubert himself), and that would have spoiled my reverie. As it was, we were not much interested at the Jagdhaus. The avenue of magnificent oaks, and the sweet and smiling country that leads to the convent of Lichtenthal, and the succession of little grass valleys, lone and woody, divided by a stream clearer than clear, with here and there a rough bridge of loose

planks flung across it, was more in our way. Quitted our carriage at Geroldsau, and proceeded on foot to the cascade of the Butte, a delicious walk of about three quarters of a league through a sweet gorge. It is not Switzerland, but resembles it, as a pretty child does a magnificent mother, and sounds were echoed from the hills which prolonged the illusion; young voices calling the cows from their upland pastures, with a shrill ringing cry, clear and startling like the *ranz des vaches*, and answered by the rude blast of the shepherd's horn. I love the echoing swell of the Alp-horn; its wild free sound suits the mountain shepherd's haunts and occupation; but this evening an old blind man sat in the pathway blowing feebly through it, as a means of attracting attention and soliciting charity. I wished that he had adopted some other mode; he seemed to reduce the wild notes of this pastoral instrument to a level with those mean and miserable sounds perpetrated by the Highland beggars in the streets of London.

The fall of water is now very trivial, just enough to give a sense of freshness to the air and eye. But it forces its way through two rocky heights, feathered to their summits with foliage of every tint, from the gloomy fir to the tender and transparent beech. Seats are placed at in-

tervals along the pathway; a few were quietly occupied, and we blessed our stars for the absence of that spirit of revelry which had so much annoyed our last night's ramble. While we sat watching the falling stream, a young man, half artist, half dandy, came bounding down the hill with "most admired disorder," chose a rocky point, placed himself on it, and completed his sketch in three minutes; then starting up, thrust his fingers through his bristling crop, adjusted the breast of his coat with one dexterous touch that sent it out jutting like a pigeon's craw, and shot off up the steep with his hasty sketch in his portfolio and a smile on his lip that seemed to augur a certainty of success on the Boulevard des Capucins, or the Gallerie de Bois next winter. An aspirant in the arts who has not yet found his level, and who knows that Claude was an apprenticed pastry-cook, and the Caracci sons of butchers and tailors, and has heard that a man of genius, being nothing, may yet be every thing, is the very personification of hope; but one who has been weighed and found wanting, and who finds himself an artist without bread, when he might have been a thriving tradesman, has a lot in the hard casts of life that beggars common wretchedness. I never see an exhibition, with its back-ground of desperate efforts, without

a passing melancholy thought of hope in its young presumption, and utter hopelessness in its long despair.

And now for the Murgthal, the valley of the Murg, and the sweetest and wildest that I have yet seen out of Switzerland. We rose at five o'clock to take it in its beauty and ensure a long day; and fortunate it was for us that we had done so, for the rain, which fell incessantly during two or three hours, spoiled a great part of it. We, however, reached Nieuberstein (an old castle modernised into insignificance) without impediment through the little town of Gerusbach, whose fountain, falling from a sculptured column into a square reservoir surmounted by the doleful figure of a saint carved in stone, is "all over" Swiss. The castle of Nieuberstein (I am not sure that it is not Eberstein) stands in a bold position, lording it from the brow of a mountain over the vale below, the Murg flowing beneath, and a forest (the awful Black one itself, I believe) stretching backwards far and wide over the adjacent hills; good, and rather peculiar, with the romantic character that belongs to forest scenery, and a cheerful one that does not always belong to the romantic, which is oftener sombre than smiling, and has the charming or the faulty property (as it may be) of giving a

musing tendency to the mind. We had mounted up to the castle by a winding foot-way; a turret within the garden enclosure seemed to offer a fine point of view, and as some flower knots, in high order, and a stripe or two of grass freshly mown gave assurance that it was not absolutely uninhabited, we ventured to knock, first humbly, and then more boldly at a side-door, but it was not opened unto us; and while we were moping about, seeking for an aperture by which we might introduce ourselves, the clouds suddenly divided and down came the rain, very uncivilly wetting us through before we could get into a place of shelter. At length, after many "moving accidents by flood and field," loss of gloves, sketch-book, pencils, &c., and a full hour's incarceration in a musty cellar amidst vats and rat-holes, we took advantage of a bright moment, and floated down the hill to a cabaret at Oberzoth, where we dined merrily on bread and cheese, with the addition of a few slices of ham and some potatoes of L——'s own frying, having first wrapped ourselves up in the cloaks and shawls which we had fortunately left in the carriage, and hung our clothes to dry upon that heart's core of German comfort, the huge stove. Alas! when we took them off all stiff and shrivelled from the intense heat, we found our shoes so curtailed

of their fair proportions, that neither forcing nor coaxing could get them up at heel; but an afternoon, fresh as if the world had just been made, quickly effaced the recollection of the morning's disasters; the rain-drops hung upon the grass, and fell with a soft pattering sound in sparkling showers from the heavy boughs, while the sky looked bright and blue, and the sun threw about its lights and the mountains their shadows in magnificent confusion.

The Murgthal is like a Swiss valley reflected in a convex mirror reduced to a scale of diminished grandeur, but preserving all its freshness of colouring and sharpness of detail. It is Swiss to its very goîtres, pendent and projecting, which are as general here as in the Valais;—Swiss, too, in its lumbering cottages with their comfortable litter about them, the piled wood, the array of bee-hives, and all the et cæteras of pastoral and agricultural life. Huts looking like chalets, but used only to keep fodder in, are scattered here and there on long stripes of green turf which divide the woods at intervals, or on patches of bright verdure moistened by the rushing stream. Oaks hang about profusely, and villages cluster on the river's brink; the scene is new and full of life. A population in the midst of forests and mountains, occupied in fell-

ing, sawing, and piling wood, which is afterwards formed into rafts and floated down the river, give it the busy air of a new settlement without rubbing off its primitive freshness. Several rafts passed along, gliding swiftly with the stream, each with one man on it steering dexterously through the obstructing rocks by the aid of a pole. L—— thought that the whole scene, with its dams and saw-mills, its bustling people and romantic background, had the air of a Norwegian river-scene in water-colours.

Turned back at Forbach, a town deep in the valley, and regretted afterwards that we had done so. It would have been better to have gone forward, making more intimate acquaintance with scenes which promised a fine chequering of loneliness and life, than to have made, as we did, a tame circuit of several miles to see the very tame chateau of La Favorita.

At Gerusbach we quitted the road by which we had entered the valley, and crossing the bridge, looked back upon the town and saw that it was strikingly situated. The Murg flows here through a widened channel; its banks are agreeable, but nothing more. Indeed, the latter part of the drive from Gerusbach to La Favorita is exceedingly poor: the first better, but common-place.

A country house, of a pleasing elevation, on a dead flat, converted into an English garden in a simple unpretending taste, and enlivened by a wine shop within its grounds, with trellised bowers full of fierce mustachios, smoking and staring, and swearing too, I believe, by the uproar of sounds that issued from those green retreats, has nothing very indemnifying about it. Got home at nine o'clock, dirty and tired, after more than fifteen hours' fagging, just in time to escape a second deluge, varied with thunder and lightning.

In the castle of Baden (not the old one) is a vaulted chamber, where the terrible brothers of the bloody league held their mysterious meetings. There are dungeons too, black and fearful; but we have taken it all on trust, and I know not why we have done so; for those sombre accessories of iniquitously used and long extinguished power have always grappling irons about them that strike deeply into the imagination. But we had, I suppose, an instinct for broad daylight, a hill and forest tendency; besides, we left it to the last, and a thing left to the last is almost always forgotten or remembered too late.

As a place of dissipation, Baden has the usual attractions. As a spot uniting the advantages of mineral baths, the conveniences of a town, and the resources of society, with rides and drives such as

one can scarcely expect to find amidst the peopled haunts of man, it is almost unique. There is a lonely charm about its mountain solitudes, a romantic character impressed upon its ruins, which belong more to the untrodden wild than to the vicinity of a fashionable watering-place, with its concomitant of artificial excitement.

The scenes that shut in the town are delicious; they hang up before the eye like exquisite pictures framed in something better than gold-leaf. From the castle, the Conversation-Haus, and many other easily accessible points, are views which would well repay exertion, but scarcely call for any. Altogether, I hardly know a more inviting place for an idler, (with fine weather taken for granted); the Black Forest in its dark monotony and German legends on one side, and the Rhine in its winding varieties on the other; while on its skirts hang Carlsruhe, Stutgard, &c., for the lovers of courts and operas, and Strasburg for those who delight in gothic towers, the reminiscences of an old town, or the drumming of a garrison. Hotels not good, and dearer than those of Spa or Brussels; but private lodgings good and reasonable—as we are told. The Grand Duke's family seldom visit Baden, and when they do, add (another *on dit*) but little to the general gaiety.

Dined to-day at the table d'hôte, and at the collegiate hour of one,—the usual time for table d'hôte gatherings from Aix-la-Chapelle to Baden. Here, as in Switzerland, it is no easy matter to get a comfortable dinner in a private apartment; you are served reluctantly; the additional trouble seems never sufficiently recompensed by the additional price. Dinner and attendance are in general indifferent and slovenly; master and waiters evidently put out of their way, and the eating room (with few exceptions) a small bed-chamber.

The arrangement of a table d'hôte is (as far as we have seen) always the same in this part of Germany. First, soup served with cold ham, sliced sausages, pickled fruits, salad, cucumbers—in short, a full repast of hors d'œuvres, followed by cutlets, omelet or fritters, and the indispensable bouillie; roast chickens or ducks then make their appearance, with ragouts of various kinds—fish, chevreuil, or something in that way, and preserved fruits; and, last of all, the substantial roast and a redundancy of sweets, followed speedily by the dessert, of which (after the French fashion) cheese always makes a part.

The company is usually a heterogeneous chequering of various nations. Rambling English, sometimes of decided rank, bestowing their tedi-

ousness on strange lands and people; occasional Russians, whiskered chevaliers (probably *d'industrie*), idle officers, young gentlemen on the improving tack, youthful couples just noosed, and neighbouring families evidently taking the thing as a recreation; matrons broad, full-blown, and of vast circumference, with mates to match them, heading the troop of chubby round-headed boys, and downcast sentimental misses, who usually fill up the foot of the table—some enjoying the abundance before them, others finding every thing insupportable. Now and then an officious remark, half civil, half intrusive, is ventured by an "habitué" to some handsome stranger, who answers with cold politeness, or is deaf, just as the wind sits. Occasionally information is gained, character studied, and curiosity amused, but very frequently the whole passes in silence; each party fences in its most attractive members, and those who hang loose eat and depart.

CHAPTER VIII.

BADEN TO OFFENBERG — BLACK FOREST — VILLINGEN — SOLHAUS — SCHAFFHAUSEN — BADEN (ON THE LIMAT) — HINDLEBANK — TOMB OF MARIE LANGHANS — BERNE.

THERE are few things (in a small way) more dreary than a four-o'clock breakfast at an inn. The bread of the day before toasted, or rather burned, into a false show of freshness; the unventilated room smelling of the last night's tobacco,—the table bearing the clammy mark of the frequent beer glass. But we have daylight now; it is the fœtid lamp of an Italian *osteria*, or the tallow candle tottering in its brass socket, that makes the morning meal truly comfortless. To-day it was cheered by the bustling groupes who passed our windows on their way to market,—a charming getting up of very white sleeves, and very short petticoats, and flat straw hats of umbrella dimensions, embroidered fantastically on the outside

with black, and hanging on the back instead of covering the head, sobered down by files of bare-legged matrons striding forward with uncramped steps, while the less mercurial males followed in straight cocked hats and obstinate faces; all falling in well with their goats and donkies, and overflowing panniers stored with the green varieties of the kitchen garden.

Saw nothing between Baden and Offenberg but an invincible mist, and a hill now and then peeping through it, except a group of peasants happily thrown together, a rich mellow blending of scarlet, blue, rose-colour, and black, all praying, and devoutly too, (there was no mistaking it), with their knees buried in the long wet grass, and their heads receiving the heavy rain-drops that showered down on them as the wind stirred the boughs of the overhanging trees. A Madonna, sumptuously arrayed in a sky-blue robe, profusely decorated with stripes of gilt paper, and a gorgeous crown of the same on her head, looked down benignly through her flaxen curls on her simple-hearted votaries.

Here, as in many parts of Catholic Switzerland (particularly in the small cantons), religion seems to be reduced to the worship of painted wood, gilt paper, and vermilion. Enlightened lookers-on call

it idolatry; and yet if these poor people (for there is much more actual poverty in Switzerland than is generally imagined) can find a solace in the finery of wooden saints, or the glitter of pasteboard angels, one ought not, perhaps, to wish them deprived of it, at least until something better has supplied its place. This sort of image-worship is allied (not necessarily, but inseparably in their minds) with the belief in an hereafter, the only staff that can support the *very* poor through their weary pilgrimage. According to the doctrine of equivalents, every state has its compensation; faith must be theirs. And is not this hope which never dies, this certain anchor, worth half a century of pomp and pageantry, with that dreary, hopeless, appalling close, from which the imagination recoils with unspeakable horror?

Passed through Offenberg triumphantly, steeds flying, whips cracking, post-boys with large bunches of artificial roses spread out in their hats. But alas! for the evanescence of human glory;—snap went a spring when we were a mile from the town, and here we are back again for the day, and the night too, getting all that we can in the way of entertainment out of a market (the markets are a benediction to us to-day), rich in costumes, grotesque and gorgeous as eye can desire—the women

ugly, in velvet caps, so arranged as to produce the same effect as the nets worn by the *Trasteverine* at Rome, but the men incomparable. Wide skirted coats of some dark colour (occasionally black velvet) lined with white or scarlet, thrown open so as to display a red, or very bright green waistcoat, with embroidered braces (white or black) worn outside the splendid vest; a large cocked hat gallantly thrown off from the front of the head, or soberly flapped before, and the toilette finished by a spruce nosegay in the button-hole. The younger beaus sometimes adopt the flat, low-crowned beaver, with a few flowers, or a peacock's feather, or a velvet band and silver buckle. We were amused at seeing the carters driving from the saddle,—three-cornered hats, flowing skirts and all, looking like the worthy burghers of Quidlenberg, or Sir Walter Raleigh in the Critic, degraded to the management of a dray-horse.

The road as we left Offenberg was brimful of life, and sabbath finery. Every hive pouring out its swarm, all with prayer-books in their hands, and nosegays in their bosoms. Many of the young men were very handsome; bold, but not vulgar; but the females have no longer the finely developed shapes of the Rhenish nymphs. The narrow shoulders, thick waists, and squat proportions of

Switzerland already proclaim its vicinity. However, they looked clear and shining; no economy of soap either on linen or faces, and much sobriety of deportment. No straggling curl,—every hair alive with the spirit of premeditated mischief, or glance shot slyly in the incarnate thirst of conquest; but all trim and straight forward, with that kind of coarse pre-concerted primness easily (time and season permitting) converted into heavy mirth. Much of Teniers, but nothing of Albano.

But even without the colouring of poetry, there is something delightful in the repose of a village sabbath. Its chastened gaiety affects and soothes the heart; duties performed and comfort received, prepare the mind for gladness; and the very feeling of liberty and quiet after six days' labour, is in itself positive enjoyment. The stated recurrence too of duly anticipated recreation, counted upon with certainty and enjoyed with confidence in its assured return, has a charm that monotony cannot destroy, and which, to a mind unaccustomed to strong excitement, is, perhaps, as powerful as that of novelty itself.

The stream of cheerful faces came along with us into the Kintzthal, a valley not meriting all, nor indeed a tithe of what guide-books, inn-keepers, and other professional puffers say of it. It opens

meagrely; the uplands, cultivated in little patches, have a frittered look; as we advance, the valley narrows; the Kingst, at first broad and demure, becomes a rapid country stream; the cottages, heavily thatched or covered with wooden tiles, though inferior to the patriarchal habitations of the canton of Berne, have their air, and become the scene. Approaching Hornsberg, a green valley, with a rushing stream and a ruined castle standing out gracefully, forms an agreeable picture; but, on the whole, the Kingsthal is tame work after the *thals* and the *bergs* that we have left behind us.

Took an additional pair of horses at Hornsberg, and a boy, with two carnations stuck behind his ears and a hat lavishly decked with posies, to help us up into a wild pastoral country, with a wealth of pine woods spread over it. The postmaster, a personage of austere deportment, gave us grave assurance of being in the very heart of the Schwartzvald. Higher up we were told that we had yet half an hour's climbing before we could get to its confines. "Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"—even the postboys differed in opinion, so on we went mounting continually, and expecting at every step to find ourselves dropping down into the depths of the terrible Black Forest, to whose awful solitudes we had added a few castles

hanging on gray crags, and a decent allowance of caverns. But neither the gloomy ruin, looking as if it had hidden supernatural things, nor the enchanter's cave, nor the mysterious pool of clear dark water, in which the spirits of the lake and flood were used to meet to hatch deadly plots against the glory of Christian knights, were to be seen. Our air-built castles vanished into a cold and dreary stretch of meagre country, with clusters of raw looking cottages scattered about like little encampments. I grieved to give up the thrilling legends of the Schwartzvald, without having even a robber's lair, or the shadow of a knight in armour wherewith to console myself. Nothing but naked cottages bleaching in the glare of a white sun, with geese cackling, and cocks crowing, and bluff children sprawling on the hot grass. Dear and delicious Ondine! this is not thy forest; nor is the muddy pool in which another batch of urchins are just now paddling, happy in the society of a dozen young ducks, the aquatic domain of thy venerable uncle. We may be benighted and bewildered here all to no purpose; no angry river nymph will splash water against the door, or white mantled Fraisondin look in at us through the window.

But light hearts beat every where, and light

heels are found even amongst the clumsy lasses of the Black Forest. Four girls, looking like Rheinard's admirable costumes, are chasing each other through the fields; and now tired of their sport, have flung themselves down on a green hillock by the road side, showing more of the tightly drawn up stocking than might be deemed decorous at Almack's. There is certainly no magic about them, but a great deal of rough mirth, and a power of effrontery. All very innocent, I dare say, but the bashful graces seem to be no longer dwellers in cottages, whatever the virtuous principle may be.

The little town of Villengin teeming with smart modes and gay faces was all picture; such singular toilettes, and so endlessly varied. But the grotesque subduing the graceful, except where the females were handsome, and had natural taste enough to arrange their ponderous draperies advantageously. Such layers of petticoats! tenfold, I believe, with borders of all colours pending one below the other. Such velvet spencers! and gaudy vests, and straps, and collars, and morsels of embroidery stuck here and there, unfortunately proving by their tarnished costliness that the original expense of such fine things is too great to admit of their being often renewed; and then the

pretty hat, and floating streamers; and the prettier than pretty scarlet stocking without a wrinkle!

Why do not our country girls follow some country mode? no matter whether simple or fantastic, it would be at least original. It would identify them, and be always pleasing from its association with rural images and recollections; they would be a class, and a very handsome one. But the wretched long-backed, or no-backed spencer; the draggling flounce and deplorable bonnet, decorated with flowers no longer artificial, but honestly showing their wire and paper poverty, give to beauty, which in a peasant's dress would have its own fresh natural character, an air of town vulgarity that makes its very attraction offensive.

I have been trying to recollect, as we jog along, a robber-story of potent interest, of which this spot, or somewhere hereabouts (we are again in the desert country), was some five-and-twenty or thirty years ago the scene. I heard it told with amazing effect by a gentleman whose conversational talents have rarely been equalled, and who enriching it as he went along with the light and life touches of a great master, made us draw close and hold our breath lest we should lose a syllable of its delightful horrors.

It was, I remember, an English family (I have forgotten the name), who, being forced by some untoward circumstance to pass the night in a lone house in the heart of this very forest, heard the footsteps of murderers approaching and the whispers that disclosed their deadly intent. Blood was on the curtains and on the floor, witnessing to the deeds of death already and recently done in their lonely chamber. The door had neither lock nor bar within, but on the outside was a firm fastening. Already they heard the withering sound of the withdrawing bolt, and almost saw the knife of the assassin, when the lady, flinging open the casement and looking out upon the black and interminable forest, uttered an intense shriek—long and piercing, and repeated with the wild tenacity of one clinging to life after hope was extinct.—"Is not that the sound of a trumpet? Ah no! it is only the hollow blast.—But listen:—it approaches—it comes near. I hear the clattering of horses' hoofs, and voices—human voices!—troops approach—arms glisten.—Glory be to God, we are saved!"—and so it was. A detachment of cavalry benighted, and having lost their way in the darkness, struck into a path in the forest, never before perhaps traversed in that dreary hour; and seeing lights in a distant window, made towards the isolated house,

and reached it just in time to rescue the intended victims from the horrible fate which awaited them.

But bye roads are now turned into high roads, and nothing worse than an indifferent bed or a meagre dinner is to be apprehended. No getting to Schaffhausen this evening; we have come a long day's journey, and find that what with hills and post-house delays, we should have no chance of arriving there till eleven, or later. So we prefer sleeping at Zolhaus to a three hours' drive in the dark, with the possibility of bad roads, or bad horses,—perhaps both. Our present halt is at a roomy cottage, in a hamlet of which it constitutes the principal feature; two or three smaller ones (probably dependant on it) making the whole amount. Here we have a room with six windows and four doors, all of which we have thrown open; for the good folks of this country (in common with the inhabitants of Switzerland), seem to consider fresh air as detrimental either to health or comfort, at least so one is led to suppose from the unventilated state and vapour-bath temperature of their houses.

In the absence of more essential articles of furniture, we have an oil portrait of St. Francis, and a group of the three Marys in white marble, deco-

rating our chamber. We have English engravings too, fac-similes of Pitt, Nelson, and Sir Sidney Smith; all, no doubt, selected from the hoards of some Italian pedlar; one probably of those itinerant traders, who, issuing from Italy and the Tyrol, journey all over Europe, carrying their wares from Inspruck or the lake of Como, to Moscow, London, Stockholm, "Nova Zembla, or the Lord knows where."

Our host seemed indignant when I asked if we were not on the skirts of the Schwartzvald;—we were in the middle of it, he said, with a black air of authority. Thus assured, I look around, and see a spread of cultivated country, intersected by pine-forests, and only characterised by the fanciful habiliments and simple manners of its good-natured population. Nods and smiles, and other intelligible indications of courteous welcome, greet the traveller wherever he passes. Blessed spirit of hospitality! semi-barbarous virtue as thou art, I still must love thee—love thee in thy smiles and greetings, even when unenforced by the pudding or the sirloin. It is good taste now to disclaim against this antiquated quality, as symptomatic of moral darkness—as a barbarous indulgence, a bog-and-heath virtue, fit only to be exercised by the Mohawk or the wild Irishman. Even be it so.

But one who has been a sojourner in foreign lands, who has been weighed in the scales and meted with the measure of a stranger, knows well and feels deeply the value even of a kind look;—feels where it was given, and rarely forgets where it has been withheld.

But *forget* one must and ought to do in this world. There is so much good to recollect, that we should not charge the memory with ungrateful tasks. I know a very pretty girl, who, when any thing goes wrong, says, with a bright smile, "What does it signify?" This young philosophy is a very charming thing, but the time comes when every thing signifies. I wish it were otherwise; we should be better and happier.

As we prepared to go to rest, we heard voices, as of persons in prayer, issuing from the opposite cottage. A female read aloud, in a devout and serious tone, while younger voices responded at intervals with fervent, not boisterous piety. There was something impressive in this quiet giving out of the heart, which finer ceremonials often want.

Took a reinforcement this morning to pull us up the mountain; it was quite enough for six horses. An opening in the hills gave us a peep of the lake of Constance, and of some singular castellated-looking hills standing up in isolated com-

panionship. Passed soon after the barrier village which separates Switzerland from the Duchy of Baden, and broiled on through a close valley, a quiet, limited scene, agreeably wooded, till Schaffhausen opened upon us, atrociously running away from the Rhine, but with pleasant things about it. I regretted that one of the first objects which presented itself to our view on entering Switzerland, should be that too conspicuous and frequent feature of its scenery, the triangular gallows, showing itself off in its naked hideousness from the summit of a green knoll, as if it were a beautiful or an edifying thing to look at. I believe it is useless, and I am sure it is painful to see the memorial of crime thus pushed in amidst the bounties of nature. We are aware that the sight of this ignominious instrument does not awe the hardened; but are we certain that it may not awaken criminal thoughts in the wavering mind, or familiarize it with images of guilt and punishment until both have lost their salutary terrors? At all events, it is a vile blot in the landscape, and the sooner one runs away from it the better, especially when one has the Rhine to run to. The beautiful Rhine!—how abundant its flood—how triumphantly impetuous its motion! And then its colour; bright green, like the purest chrysophaze!

It has not this fine tint when it winds through the Rhingau, but it can afford to look brown and yellow *there*.

The little town of Schaffhausen has nothing remarkable about it. Its painted houses, covered with quaint devices; numerous fountains, the standing (a punster would say *running*) luxury of a Swiss town, guarded by grim warriors, rudely cut in stone; its three or four print-shops, with views of the Great Fall, and portraits of the Oberland beauties spread out in the windows; its eternal bells, iron-tongued clock, and startling watchmen, have their parallels in every town in Switzerland. We did, of course, what all travellers do,—hurried off to the Great Fall as soon as we had shaken the dust from our feet. Leaving our carriage at the castle of Lauffen, which overlooks the cataract, we descended to a wooden gallery and came at once upon the headlong flood in all its turbulent magnificence. After having seen nearly all the fine things in this way in Italy and Switzerland, I was astonished. The amazing rush of water—the thunder of its sound—the clouds of sparkling foam dashed up to the very heavens, have a power and awfulness in their force and fury, from which the mind does not easily disengage itself. I would not pass a night on that

quaking gallery, looking into the depths below by moonlight or by starlight, and fancying, as I gazed, that its waters increased in volume, and their rush in fierceness and rapidity,—no, not for Othello's world of chrysolite, or for a better thing, our own beautiful world of hill and valley. I should go mad and die, thinking that all the plagues of Sycorax had lighted on me. The effect of the fall from this point is that of a tremendous glacier, forced forward from its grapplings by some awful concussion of the elements, and shivered by the violence of the shock into millions of icy particles. But with this view ends the glory of Schaffhausen;—all the rest is disappointment. Many people talk of the pavilion below the castle of Lauffen as the best point; but I cannot think so, perhaps because I saw it after the gallery, and the first impression was so strong, that all which came after it seemed (by comparison) poor work.

The front view of the river certainly is so, and so is that from a show point above the castle of Im—— something, I forget what, on the opposite shore. The banks are low, and altogether inadequate in dignity to the vast breadth of the cataract, which is indeed considerably too broad for its height. It wants more rocks to oppose and break its fury; it wants mountains too, and forests; and

it has gentle acclivities, meagre vineyards, and sooty cottages. The banks would be pretty as mere river scenery, but the fall of the Rhine demands something more in keeping with its august turbulence. The flood preserves through all its commotions its matchless colour: I know not where it takes up the dull reddish hue with which its waters are imbued lower down. I believe this exquisite green is peculiar to the cataract of Schaffhausen; in all the great falls that I have seen, the body of water has been rather turbid than pure. The Ghiesbach, perhaps, may be an exception; of this I am not sure, and there may be others which I have forgotten. Looked in at a camera-obscura:—wretched work!—the Rhine creeping upon paper, while its *real* roar was in one's ear! I was indignant, but the showman hinted at some who preferred it to the living cataract! Nothing so irregular as the grammàr of taste, with its endless variety of declensions.

No more posting after Schaffhausen, so we have hired a man and his four lean horses to undertake us as far as Berne. A very agreeable country to beautiful little Baden, spread out on the banks of the rapid Limmat. It looked so invitingly in its green defile, that I regretted passing through it so hastily; yet the steep streets, not absolutely

perpendicular, but almost as near it as any carriage road can be, are particularly calculated to efface regret.

Stopped before we reached Baden at Kaysersthoul, a small town on the Rhine, with that eminently Swiss feature, a covered bridge. It has the honour to be mentioned by Montaigné, which is all that I know about it. We posted ourselves on the bridge, and sending the horses to bait at the inn, had the carriage placed close to the balustrade, drew up the blinds at the other side, arranged our portable table, unpacked the provisions which we had brought from Schaffhausen, and dined with the Rhine rushing beneath our feet, and nothing else in view but its green banks and a few distant houses.

This delightful careless life,—dining one day under a tree and the next on the brink of a river, forms a most agreeable counterpoise to the tedium of travelling at the rate of thirty miles a-day, as we do now, and a most cheerful exchange for the usual alternative of a smoky public room, or an unventilated bed-chamber.

As we drawled along the road, walking up the hills and easily keeping pace with our plodding cattle, Gertrude found a model for her pencil and time to take advantage of it, while we sent back

to the town to inquire for a lost umbrella. A country woman, old and weather-beaten, but erect in carriage and perfect in costume, was the subject, and not a little proud of being so. The "cordage" of her face relaxed into a broad grin, while she expressed, by intelligible signs, that she considered herself as no longer young, a sort of gone-by beauty, but still not amiss. But vanity finds an altar every where, and temples, I should think, in the canton of Argovie, drawing my inference from the toilette caprices in which the women indulge. Five girls have just now passed with small round heavy crowns, formed of velvet and steel, and foil, and all kinds of glittering trumpery, planted on the front of the forehead, but how sustained there I could not make out. It was not the baptismal pincushion of Berne, but a regular-bred crown, a queenly one, like those on the effigies of Blanche of Castille, or Eleanor de Guienne.

To-day is high holiday, and all the hues of the Iris, and all the spangled vests and fluted stomachers in the district, are on duty. Amongst a thousand overloaded modes is one which I think charming: a black cap trimmed with broad black lace, that hangs flat upon the face down to the point of the nose. How a pair of fine eyes would tell through this light shading! but here all are

countenances of rough labour, hardened by the inclemencies of weather.

The females in this country always carry their finery solidly. A French girl would flutter under it like a butterfly, and an Italian (always tasteful) would look like a nymph of antiquity; but here glitter contrives to seem homespun, and the women to be downright hard working folks, in dresses fantastic enough for the *coryphée* of a pastoral ballet.

At Baden we crossed the Limmat, and found it broad and bustling, sufficiently so to recall the recollection of its impetuous beauty at Zurich. A moon, quite Venetian, guided us to Lentzbourg, and threw out its castled hills in beautiful relief. The Golden Lion merits an N. B. for its extreme cleanliness, good fare, and civil host. This is a cheerful looking town of looms and weavers; somebody expatiated on the jaconots, and the mulls, and the gold and silver muslins, at sixty and seventy francs an ell—I think they said,—but this sounds like a swell, and perhaps was one.

Some ruins were pointed out to us as having once been the castle of the Swiss ogre, Ghesler; and soon after Arbourg and its fortress (the only one now remaining in Switzerland) made their appearance. Here we dined, close to a rivulet, command-

ing from our encampment a defile washed by the Aar, with a mountain barrier and a look onwards to the Oberland Alps.

While François and the flower of waiting women were stowing away our table equipage, a napkin dropped into the stream; in leaped Amy, bustling with the would-be waves like a river nymph, and quite as proud of recovering the prize as if she had carried off Hylas, or any other refractory "beau garcon" of antiquity. O the joy of blossoming life! What a delicious thing it is to be young, and to see every thing through rose-coloured glasses! but with the wish to be pleased, and a certain sunniness of mind (more in our own power than we imagine), we may look through them a long time. When the sun shines and the earth holds a bright holiday, I still feel as if life and hope were all before me, and yet the story is told, happily told, (most happily!) but told out and out as far as belongs to dreams and fancies! and yet I dream on, and love flowers, and air, and sunshine, as if I was but just beginning life. An old friend of my childhood (who was no smellfungus) used to say, "'Tis a wicked world! God keep us in it!" and I find myself quite as stanch a disciple of his sunny philosophy now, as when I used to read Mother Goose and believe in wishing-caps.

We were half disposed to stop at Mogenthal, a pretty village with blooming gardens and an inn of high repute; but passed on through a country of wooded hills, fresh streams, and goodly meadows to Herzagenbuschee, (what a silvery sound!) where we have found comfortable quarters for the night.

The field labour, or at least the chief part of it, seems, in the cantons of Berne and Argovie, to fall to the lot of the women; an ungallant arrangement, at which Jaffier, the Chevalier de Grieux, or any other of those tender and devoted lovers who would wrap up women (whether angel or imp) in adoration and cachmere, would shudder. They sow, and reap, and dig, and mow too, under a scorching sun, and seem to snap their fingers at its fierceness and dare it to its worst. But as mighty powers cannot be braved with impunity, the deep revenge is burned into their faces; I never saw so many peeled and withered visages. The very *very* young have a purple sort of freshness; not the purple light of love, but of the red potato after it has undergone half a dozen ablutions; but even that soon passes away. The children whose complexions are yet untarnished, are fine little creatures; but what with the hot sun, and the cold wind, and the no bonnets, sad havoc is soon made amongst the lilies and roses.

Stopped at Hindlebank to look once more at the tomb of Marie Langhans, the beautiful wife of the village pastor, who died here * in her first confinement. It is sunk below the pavement of the church and concealed by folding doors, which the sexton opens suddenly, as if to heighten the effect; but this stage trick is out of place. The sculptor has chosen the terrible moment when "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." The tomb is rent from the top to the bottom; a fair female figure appears to rise from it, the face turned upwards, the right arm raised over the head as if to remove a fragment of stone which still obstructs its passage, while the left supports an infant, whose little hand is gently pressed against its mother's bosom; surprise and inquiry light up the soft and delicate features, and over the whole figure is diffused an air of quiet dignity and maternal love.

Marie Langhans died on Easter eve, and this circumstance suggested to Nahl (a famous German sculptor then staying in her husband's house) the idea, which he has so perfectly embodied that it presents itself instantly to the mind in all its sublime simplicity. The effect is impressive, I thought

* In 1760.

awfully so; it cannot be gazed on without emotion, and a strange emotion too, which even the broad glare of a meridian sun cannot entirely subdue. It affected my imagination something in the same way (though not so unpleasantly) as the tomb of Rousseau did, when I first saw it in the cold vaults of St. Geneviève, with the arm stretched out of the dark aperture.

It struck me as I looked again at this interesting monument, that some accident had happened to the nose, which rendered the face less beautiful than it appeared when I saw it for the first time, three or four years ago. It seems as if it had been broken and joined on again; but it is altogether deeply impressive, and merits to have been executed in a material more beautiful and enduring than the coarse block of sandstone out of which it has been wrought.

Generally speaking, all first-rate things gain by being seen a second time. Berne certainly does. As we descended the hill to the bridge, it stood out brightly on its beautiful peninsula; houses and trees, churches and gardens, hanging one above another, like the sunny terraces of Italy, all blended in harmonious confusion; while the rushing Aar, green and beautiful, swept proudly round its base, encircled in its turn by sloping

banks, full of the bland and pastoral character of beauty which marks its sweet vicinity. We were cheated out of the silver Alps by a mountain of clouds, which very ungenteelly put its woolpacks in the way; but the picture sustained itself (and superbly too), even without these powerful auxiliaries.

Two things strike a stranger on approaching Berne. The first is the marked attention paid to the wants and comforts of the humbler classes of society, for whom the path seems smoothed, the benches placed, the shelves to rest their loads upon arranged with paternal care. Nothing here is magnificent except the roads, which are broad and noble, shaded by fine trees, and kept in the highest order; but everything denotes an equality of comforts. The pageantry with which an absolute government (however narrow may be its sphere of action) loves to surround itself, is here dispensed with. There are few carriages—no shows—I believe no theatre; but (and this is the second point that fixes the stranger's attention) instead of the pompous trappings of an arrogant aristocracy, the eye is recreated by the sight of a happy population, well fed, well dressed, well lodged, paying few taxes, and having an air of contentment about them decidedly indicative of

the absence of anxiety for the morrow; that wearing-out feeling that turns the muscles into cordage, and sallows the cheek sooner and more indelibly than sun, wind, and hard labour, all put together.

Probably the patriarchs lived nearly in the same way as the farmers now live in the canton of Berne. The members of each family cultivate their own land, working together in the fields even to the third and fourth generation. The damsels are, like the fair daughter of Laban, keepers of their fathers' flocks, and the elders may sit under the shade of their fig-trees, and count their herds, and look round upon their swelling fields and their clustering fruits, with as little care for Kaiser or for King as if they were settled down amidst the tents and camels of the Valley of Mamre.

And now we are once more fairly in Switzerland (I never think myself so until I am in the canton of Berne), in the midst of dragon-fly caps, sulphur hats, sweeping roofs, and all the delightful sun-repelling projections and picturesque redundancies of the Bernese cottage, and all the enchantment of its scenery. Quartered again with the illustrious Neiderhausen, who (powdered and bustling as usual) assures us, that his table d'hôte is the first in Switzerland, "montée supérieurement—char-

mante société—tous gens de bon ton;" and served at four o'clock, "absolument pour faire plaisir aux Anglais."

It is something like coming home to be here, among so many intimate objects, each recalling an old recollection or awakening a familiar image. If curiosity is no longer on the stretch, or the feverish excitement of novelty no longer quickens the pulse, the power of quietly dwelling on tried enjoyments, of reviving pleasurable feelings, and renewing old companionship, even with inanimate objects, is, perhaps, more than an adequate compensation. Anxiety lest anything worth seeing should be heedlessly passed by, and the continual flutter of spirits caused by an uninterrupted succession of novelties, do not always leave the mind at liberty to appreciate objects at their real value. A second view is the touchstone, the true crucible; when I have heard travellers (speaking of the master-works of art and nature) say,—"I shall not go there again, I shall pass that by, I have seen it before," I cannot help thinking that they are wrong, and that it is better to see a first-rate picture or a beautiful work of nature again and again, than to run after insipid or negative things, merely because they are novelties.

Besides, that which is deeply impressed on the memory requires no record; we need no ledger for familiar images; and lazy travellers, or those who keep their eyes entirely to look about with, when they return to scenes already got by heart, close their note-books, as I now do mine, with a feeling of recovered freedom, of anticipated leisure which can only be justly appreciated by those who, having dragged along a broiling road for twelve or fourteen mortal hours, eating dust and warring against wasps and blue bottles, arrive half-roasted and half-stupified at the long wished-for inn, rub their eyes, deluge them with cold water, open them wide against a current of air, and use all approved means to eject their sleepy tenants; and then sit down courageously to arrange notes, scribbled with a blunt pencil on scraps of paper, half effaced and more than half unintelligible even to the writer.

"Adieu paniers! vendanges sont faites."

CHAPTER IX.

BERNE — THOUN — INTERLACKEN — LAC DE BRIENTZ — VALLEY OF GRINDELWALD — SWISS WEDDING.

"So vainly thought, so fondly hoped," — not "my muse," but my own idle self. But after all, my soft eider-down anticipations have melted into dulness, and my luxurious *far niente* into the languor of ennui. I feel something like the man, who having been tormented for years by an excruciating rheumatism, found, when he was unexpectedly relieved from it, a vacuum—a want. He missed his old enemy. It had given him constant occupation, the high privilege of complaining with impunity, and the soothing one of collecting "golden condolences from all sorts of men." So it is with my dear good-for-nothing journal. I abused it,—exclaimed against the fatigue of taking notes,—voted it bore-major, and found after all that I could not do without it. So here I am

again, flourishing my Bramah, and adding one proof more to the many already extant of the force of habit.

Alas! in naming my Bramah, I am forced to use the singular number; I can no longer say one of my Bramahs, for this is the last of my hundred, and my inch-square box is now tenantless. Luckily I am at Berne and can probably replenish, for there are few *little* things more patience-trying than the quill hacked down to the pith, and the mixture of soot and water by courtesy called ink, inflicted on the unhappy scribbler who trusts to the bounty or resources of a waiter at an inn; where, being an article not considered chargeable, it is mixed up, con amore, of any black dirt that happens to be in the way, and left to dry up or congeal until a sudden demand adds vinegar or water to it. A-propos to Bramahs:—that was a famous pen which the angel Gabriel gave to Mahomet; all faithful Mussulmans aver, that though he wrote the whole Koran from beginning to end with it, it never wanted nibbing. Cardinal de Retz, too, had a marvellous pen, one that served him faithfully through the whole of his Memoirs; Mazarin held him very cheap because he boasted of never having changed it; it was a proof, he thought, of want of genius, but I say,

thrice happy Cardinal! I would willingly take the contempt of a whole conclave upon my shoulders for such a possession, and would infinitely rather be mistress of a similar implement than of any, or all, of the three things which the Arabian Princess longed for.

I don't like the word *ugly*. It is a hard, unindulgent word, but it will come out here; it fits so well, just like Cinderella's slipper,—only with this difference—that it fits so many. No looking to the right or left without lighting on something dwarfish or dislocated; a few fine looking girls are mixed up with the mass, like plums in a school pudding, sticking out here and there, and making the most of whatever nature has given them,—their long hair for instance, which is often superb, and generally in good order: but handsome is, that handsome doth, as gossips say to children,—it is their first moral lesson. Though not always comely to the eye, the people here are very generally good-humoured and civil; the pleasant homely fashion of bidding "guten morgen" * to the passing stranger, is still retained by the peasantry, who touch their hats with a natural courteousness which has certainly nothing whatever in it of servility.

* Good morning.

Why have the people here goîtres? I should like to know, for I cannot see any palpable cause for it. They live in a delightful country, and in an open and elevated situation, not jammed in between mountains, but breathing freely, with a broad sky, and a fine soil, and a rapid river, and abundant means of comfortable existence. And yet a striking proportion of the children look like mandarins, with bald eyes, and distended bodies, and many with the boneless looking faces of the cretin, even when they are not of that awful race of mental pariahs. If they have not already goîtres, one may safely affirm that they will be favoured in time, as their parents probably have been before them; luckily they do not appear to consider this enormity as a grievance, but, like the monster-headed members of the court of Comus,

"Boast themselves more comely than before."

Strangers seem not to know what to do with themselves here. They run up and down the arcades buying wooden spoons, and dragon-fly caps, and bad prints; saunter on the public walks, (more beautiful than gay) throw apples to the bears, and then back again to their inn to watch the arrivals, examine the clouds, and speculate on the chances for the Oberlands the next day. Diplo-

matic society is said to be good here; but with two *soup tickets** in our possession, we are content to take its delights on trust. I can imagine much domestic happiness at Berne, and friendliness, and perhaps intellect; but I cannot fancy anything like gaiety: la Rue des Gentilshommes in the gray of the evening, and the Cathedral Square, and dim untrodden vistas of cloisteral aspect, where the black nun, or the white lady, or the monk whose cowl is never raised, may glide about from bat hour to day-break unmolested by aught that the earth owns, are sorely against it. When the shops are shut, (and they close very early) the town looks like a vast monastery.

August.—Rumours, and alas! more than rumours, of a camp in the Oberlands; what a profanation! On Sunday four hundred vehicles lined the road between Berne and Thoun; how the fairies of the woods and of the waters must have scudded about, playing at bopeep in their green nooks, or diving under their sedgy pools, when they saw the plumed casques and heard the neighing steeds (I take the cavalry for granted) of the Helvetian warriors. What a fuss they must have been in, poor little souls; and the water kelpies!

* As some one humorously called a letter of introduction.

very fierce fellows too, how they must have shook their dripping locks and sputtered at the invaders! just as Ondine's cousins (her "extraordinaires parens") did, when they popped up through the waves of the Danube, and whisked down again with that delicious creature in the midst of them!

But what signifies all this growling and blowing? the troops are there, and the review takes place to-morrow. We cannot even now fancy the possibility of a review at Interlacken, so are determined not to have the certainty forced upon us by ocular demonstration; besides, we are glad of an excuse to pass three or four loitering days at Berne, with the Aar below, and the woods around, and the Oberland Alps (to-day pure and glorious) rising up before us; lounging on the bastions, or strolling about under the arcades, sheltered both from rain and sun. I wonder all towns are not built in this way; but they say it is unhealthy, the circulation of air impeded, the people who live under the arcades rheumatic, and thus ends the wonder, as nine wonders out of ten do when you examine them.

What silent streets—gloomy I should say, if the sweet country did not break in from so many points, recreating the eye by its soft variety. But for the crowd of carriages which always encumbers

the door of the Faucon, the town would be a desert. Nothing in movement but the rivulets that flow through the principal streets, and the fountains, with which (as well as all other comforts and utilities) Berne it most abundantly furnished. I love the Swiss fountains with their stiff warriors, grogram dames, and allegorical conundrums, which might puzzle even Spenser himself. If there be any thing pretty or any thing gay in the living furniture of a Swiss town, it is sure to be found filling a pitcher, or washing a salad, or listening to a story, at the fountain; and one is pleased to find it there, for to say the truth, beauty is not the strong point of the females here, nor vivacity either; the youngest faces are often tanned and weather-beaten, and the prettiest have rarely any other embellishments than those of health and good-humour, and sometimes the help of a soft voice, one of the most heartfelt and least common of feminine attractions.

Dined yesterday at the table d'hôte. A gathering of English titles, silent husbands, and fair wives, with a filling up of quiet young ladies and gentlemen with the professional air of Hyde Park loungers,—no (what we call) foreigners, very stiff and heavy as such things must be. Our host of the Faucon called it sublime, or divine, or some-

thing of that kind, adding that to-day would be still more magnificent, as he expected twenty or thirty additional guests. This was quite enough for us, so we forsook the flesh-pots and ate trout and chicken in our own apartment, greatly to the displeasure of the house of Neiderhausen.

A moment before the *consommé* had made its appearance, an English carriage rattled up to the door;—house full to overflowing—many bows—more regrets,—but no admittance. Just as the final bow was made, the point of a nose peeped out from under the shade of a travelling cap. I thought it was a familiar nose, and looking again, saw that it belonged to my dear good brother, who had just arrived accompanied by his old friend M——. This unexpected meeting was delightful; and so was our drive together this evening along the charming Enghé and the dark forest of Bremgerten, stopping to look again at the pretty picture formed by a tongue of land of a singular shape, low and verdant, washed by the Aar, and lighted by a sun-beam,—squabbling amicably about the respective merits of the views from the hospital rampart and the cathedral,—and finishing by the charming coup-d'œil of the town and its accompaniments from the road to Thoun. All this is very fine, the greater part first-rate.

I have a particular liking for Berne, or rather for the country about it, yet it certainly is neither a handsome nor a cheerful town; perhaps it may be reckoned the reverse of both, but it has character, which pretty towns often want, and a position almost unique in its way. It would make a better figure if it was not approached so magnificently. The superb roads, broad causeways, and delightful walks, furnished with frequent benches, seem to denote the vicinity of a great capital, and when quiet unpretending Berne developes its steep streets and cloisteral colonnades, I can easily imagine that the general effect must be far below the awakened expectation.

Some one told us to-day that the people here are not over righteous; that they love beer or wine (I forget which,) "not wisely, but too well;" game under the rose, and pilfer strangers; so they do, I fear, in every town in Europe, and every where else except at Loo Choo. Yet they have a rigid look, an open eye, as if they had consciences, and uncompromising ones too; but I fear that Switzerland has its backsliders, like other places of less pure report. Wherever man is, there too are his passions, evil as well as good, waiting for the impetus of necessity, temptation, or example; regulated, often subdued, by education, purified

by an enlightened sense of religion, or curbed by high and virtuous influence; yet still there they are, and I much fear that ("under existing circumstances") we shall never again sleep safely in a bower by the highway side, or in a camp without latch or lock, with jewelled fingers or collars of gold, as gossips tell us young maidens used to do formerly in Ireland, and perhaps in Mexico.

A wicked wit, who fancied that man was making a crab's progress in virtue, said that nothing prevented our having a second deluge, but the inutility of the first. I quote from memory, and am not sure of doing so literally; but the thought, I think, is Champfort's. Mr. M——, with whom one cannot converse without being largely a gainer, who reads as much as Magliabechi and whose great memory "has stomach for it all," will set me right. I shall go and ask him;—gone to bed, so I must leave the point undecided till we meet at Thoun or Interlacken.

Rose at four, and were off to Thoun while the morning was yet in its early freshness, the dew sparkling on the grass, and the sun lighting up the Oberlands. As we drove slowly along, the mists rolled upwards, and every glistening bud seemed bursting into life as the warm beam fell on it. The whole female population was spread out upon the

road, watching to see the soldiers returning (sing, O be joyful!) from their bloodless campaign. I inferred, from the stolen glances of some and the admiring stare of others, that their innocent laurels were considered prodigiously warlike and becoming, and that the most thick-set youth among them had some friend in the crowd, who thought him a very nice young man. I suppose the early morning air is not favourable to beauty, for the women looked blue and bleared, but prodigiously dressed, and fine, probably, to eyes that had not recently feasted on the gorgeous fashions of Argovie and the Schwartzvald; but in ours, the merely grotesque dragon-fly cap of Berne had faded into a decent simple style of head-dress.

I scarcely know a more genteel plant than a fine double hollyhock, tall and spiral, with its rich crimson, or bright rose, or pale yellow flowers; it is generally the unprized ornament of the cottage garden, but would become the marble terrace or dressed fore-ground of my lady's bower. In the Potters' Valley, which runs almost into Thoun, it is cultivated to luxuriance. All the inhabitants of this same valley seem to be engaged in the antique occupation of pan or pipkin making, and sometimes a painted specimen is hung out that at a distance has a false air of a museum relic.

"At a distance!"—it just occurs to me that a thick book might be made on these three words. It is not alone the plate or porringer of Thoun that is beautified by distance, but sometimes nature—and often man. How poetical,—how divine sometimes,—does a scene appear *at a distance!* Look at the clouds that veil those far-off mountains, angels may be wrapped within, or paradise lie behind them; go into the midst of them,—they are fog and vapour! And the naked heart!—that looks so beautiful at the end of the long vista through which we peep at it,—might not a nearer view give us the pores and freckles of the Brobdingnagians? but as Othello, (and I believe "Dick the Apprentice") says, "no more of this."

What a day for Thoun! for its churchyard of roses, and the lovely world that churchyard looks upon! and for the terrace of Schadow, and the thousand-and-one charming things that stand up proudly or smilingly round its glassy lake! A pure blue sky; no white dazzle, but a few soft clouds parleying with the sun,* and just gently and at intervals shading its lustre. Thoun itself was beautifully thrown out, with its Swiss crown-

* "The last that parleys with the setting sun."

ings of church and castle, and terraced gardens, and its flat bridge, with the Aar rushing under it with an arrowy swiftness, that gives it a family likeness of the Rhone at Geneva. Here again the soldiers in our way, spoiling the scene, and looking as if they thought themselves heroes; and the squad of 'prentice boys and servant girls that ran out to gaze at them, as if *they* were quite sure of it.

The twilight physiognomy of Thoun is very Italian,—dark arcades, open shops above and within them;—women noisy and showy, and a piazza where one expects to find grapes and rock melons,—perhaps green almonds and ripe figs; but while the eye goes in search of them, hazel nuts as hollow as Queen Mab's, and sieves full of frosty faced apples, send you back again to Switzerland.

The women here look dressy, and rather coquettish; this comes of the camp, I suppose. More beauty than at Berne, but more goîtres, if possible. Market day; very bright, with a flood of sunshine and an amazing glitter of tin spouts; the Swiss patronise tin, and put it wherever they can, but particularly on their steeples. Remarked some very agreeable faces, and one that might be called decidedly handsome, thrust out of a window; it was a regular complacent face, its owner probably the established beauty of her class, which was not

a high one. The cynosure of a small town or set, is generally an awful concern; so secure and conscious, and such a benevolent submitting of patented charms to the eye of the curious.

Took to the delicious lake after breakfast, abusing the sun (which we had just been lauding) for throwing off its clouds, and spoiling the complexions of some pretty little girls, who were rowing a boat with great straw hats on, looking like the figures that come paddling down a perpendicular river on a Chinese screen.

Few things in Switzerland are more beautiful than the environs of Thoun,—I speak of accessible beauty, not of that which belongs to the haunts of the eagle and chamois; yet the look back towards the town from the middle of the lake is tame, neither is the lake itself, though it becomes the word *delicious*, equal to some others. It has not so much power or splendour in its boldness as Lucerne or Wallenstadt, nor so much richness or beauty in its little home pictures as Brientz; but the spread of water is superb, and the mountains at the head of the lake crowd together grandly, and have a fine shade of darkness over them.

Landed at Neuhaus at the same moment that a market-boat, freighted with soldiers, disembarked her cargo. Amazing joy on the part of the vil-

lagers, and a great deal of singing, in tune and out of tune. Every one occupied about his own particular hero, so that we had no chance of forcing ourselves into notice. Waited, I know not how long, for a char-à-banc to carry us to Interlacken; hummed "de'el take the wars," while the bold captains in worsted lace drank and smoked, and lounged about, making the most of their last day of glory; for to-morrow they will return to their plebeian occupations, and settle again into unwashed artisans. Wondered, as we passed through Unterseen, that it is not more talked of. What a rush of waters! tearing here and foaming there, and making a deafening uproar, in the midst of all sorts of houses jammed in between huge rocks, and huddled together like an unsorted box of toys; some prettily built of wood and beautified with carving, others tumbling to pieces; galleries, balconies, staircases, falling one upon another, all creaking to the eye, and tottering under the weight of life, dried grain, and wet linen; half the houses look as if they had been blown down and set up again any way, each with a dozen huge stones keeping the roof steady, and giving notice that but for their aid the wind would fly away with it. In the midst of this chaos, a tall inn stands upright; while the Yungfrau looks in through a rent in the

dark mountains on the turbulent river, that splits itself into I know not how many streams, dividing the land into spots and patches, and giving itself the airs of an archipelago.

But with all its picture, Unterseen has most particularly the air of a village; where the cocks crow all the live-long day, and dogs, babes, shrill-voiced matrons, and blacksmiths' hammers, keep the echoes in full employment. "That most enchanting wizard," who loved sleepy rills and poppy juice, would have here found all that he abhorred; a painter, a hundred things to fall in love with; and a smellfungus, a hundred things to run away from.

We have again made Interlacken our head-quarters; it is unquestionably the best central point in the Oberlands, beautiful in itself, and in the very heart of all the first-rate things; a summer would soon fly away here, like a morning dream. It is not a rugged nature that forbids approach, but an alluring one that spreads out its lakes and meadows, and its magnificent walnut-trees, wooingly; and tells you in its living book of leaves and flowers, that it is blest with a soft and genial climate, the rarest of nature's bounties in this romantic country.

"But what is that large staring fabric in the

distance?"—"O, that is a *pension*."—"And the one with the trees before it?"—"Another *pension*."—And the white building a little farther off?"—but I am afraid to listen to the answer; in two minutes more I shall fancy myself on the Marine Parade at Brighton, and expect to see a fly-boy hold up his finger at the first turning. And this is Interlacken! to think of the pitiful sprites that preside over tea-parties and watering-place gossip, bullying the glistening lakes and everlasting snow mountains; it is nothing less than sacrilege, and abominable sacrilege too, thus to rob one of nature's most beautiful temples of its fittest ornament,—its character of fresh unvisited loveliness. Formerly strangers came and saw it in its sweetness, and loved it for its simple beauty. Sufficient accommodation was found at the inn, and in a neighbouring house, for those who wished to linger amidst its charming scenes, but there was no overgrown fabric, with a vile confluence of windows like a manufactory. The supplementary building in which we were lodged was vast and gloomy with frescoed walls, out of place, perhaps, at Interlacken; but being sombre and old-fashioned, it did not offend the imagination as a spread out of modern boarding-houses in a spot so purely pastoral must do.

The same good-humoured woman who rowed us up the Lac de Brientz, when we first visited Switzerland, managed an oar again in our service this morning. The fall of the Ghiesbach was in great beauty; we dined within sound of its roar, and in the afternoon mounted up to pay obeisance to its beauteous majesty, admired it in front and in profile, from its first leap to its last; stood under its rushing volume, and looked through its mists like Ossian's heroes, or their ghosts; then descended to the schoolmaster's house (no longer hut,) and heard him and his children sing most mournfully, first one *ranz des vaches* and then another, until their stock was exhausted, when the doleful psalmody which they call their Ghiesbach song, wound up the concert, as far as belonged to the music of the country. But then came "God save the King;" it ought to have been touching to have heard this sublime national anthem, the finest thing in its way that ever was composed, chaunted by strange voices in a distant land, and in the dwelling of a mountain peasant: and yet my patriotic feelings, which should have boiled over, scarcely simmered; and while I ought to have had tears in my eyes, I was ruminating on the hand which our gracious king had (very unintentionally) in converting the schoolmaster's shed into a good

substantial house, for no doubt few can resist this tender appeal to their purses through the medium of their patriotism.

When the maestro and his pupils had ceased, some of our party tried one or two Tyrolese melodies, and while we were thus mutually giving and receiving, a party of students came down from the mountains, and addressing us in very bad French, but with much politeness, said they had seen us in the gardens at Heidleberg and would have told us of the pleasure our second apparition gave them, but, like Priam's messenger, they wanted words; so after many ineffectual hems and stammers, and unavailing struggles with two or three refractory French phrases, they settled at last into a language which we all understood; two of the party sung for us with taste and feeling, and a third played, more than agreeably, on the piano. These casual rencounters sometimes chequer the traveller's path very pleasingly; I have often in my pilgrimages received (and most thankfully) acts of kindness from utter strangers, which, in a more stationary position, a thousand etiquettes would have prohibited. An intercourse of kind offices that brings no after-day of reckoning with it, is particularly pleasing to our ungrateful natures. It is for this reason (I suppose)

that small acts of kindness excite a stronger feeling of gratitude than great benefits. In the last case, the weight of obligation is felt, often heavily and sometimes angrily, while the first seem but courtesies easily repaid, and calling for no acknowledgment beyond that implied by their acceptance. What a jump from the Ghiesbach! By the bye, the best view of the fall is from the old schoolmaster's window, better (at least so it seemed to us) than any gained by clambering up to the top. It seems odd to say that a cataract is elegant; and yet the word, though stiff and full-dressed when applied to scenery, seems to me more suitable than any other to the character of the Ghiesbach. It does not approach in grandeur to Terni, nor in awfulness to the first look of Schaffhausen, but its waters fling themselves off with an educated yet unfettered air, which, though not so powerful in its effect as the roar and flash of louder torrents, has much of amenity and gracious splendour. We find that travellers in general prefer it to any other fall in Switzerland.

What a difference does the colour of the air and sky make in the aspect of nature. This morning the lake of Brientz was quite put out by the naked blaze of a cloudless sun, and looked

arid and stony; but returning, we had all its soft details deliciously brought out by a golden sunset, followed by a warm and gradual twilight, a gentle shutting out of day, that seemed to delay its going, as if it would give us time to watch the last red lights fading from the peaked and rounded summits of cliff and promontory; while the mountains growing fainter and yet fainter, as the shades of evening fell upon them, seemed to draw nearer to each other and to fold over the head of the lake. The twinkling lights in the high chalets looked as if suspended in the air, and the fires of the cowherds, busied in the process of preparing their cheese, were visible at a considerable distance. These little touches of life qualify the solitude of nature, without impairing its delightful freshness. It was on this lake that we first heard the *ranz des vaches;* I well remember the effect of its thrilling melody, and the difficulty with which we were at last convinced that the sounds were vocal. At first we thought they proceeded from some small wind instruments, sharp octave flutes, or the pipes of the shepherds; then there was a quick catching sound and a wild vibration, like the ringing of metal when struck upon by a similar substance. Nor were we quite sure that the voice alone was concerned, until we

saw the singers (two country lads) perched upon a rock above our heads, enjoying, I have no doubt, our obvious surprise.

The musical feeling is here intense and innate; every rock re-echoes to the shepherd's horn, or the shrill falsetto of the herdsman. Add to this feeling the morbidly inherent love of country, and the effect produced by native sounds full of home images on minds thus organized, may be easily imagined; what we have been told of the influence of the *ranz des vaches*, casually heard, on the minds of the Swiss soldiers engaged in foreign service, no longer seems a fable when we have visited their country.

In the way of a valley, there is nothing like Lauterbrunnen—nothing that fills the eye and the mind so fully and so finely. The crag, the torrent, the lonely chalet, the rock of the hunter, the eternal Alp, and all the delicious fillings-up of turf and tree, are here thrown about by a mighty hand, and with a power untransferable. The mind seizes, but cannot perpetuate, the great combinations of nature; indeed the scenery of the Swiss valleys (gloriously beautiful as it is) is not of that kind whose spirit can be transfused: literally rendered upon canvass, it would astonish by its daring forms, but displease by the violence of

its contrasts. Its rocky bastions, untouched by the shifting splendours of a real sun, would seem gaunt and drear; its snow mountains fixed in their unchanging white, cold and spectral; its verdure too bright—its cataracts stony, and their feathery spray a permanent cloud of calcined magnesia. But with the changing lights and bounteous accidents of nature, warming it into life and colouring it into splendour, it is matchless.

But this valley of Lauterbrunnen! Is it not beautiful as a poet's heaven? I ask my heart this question, (the heart has always a great deal to do in these matters,) and it whispers something about a blue distance, that sounds like an *if* or a *but*. And so it is,—even in this soft scene of summer loveliness—this mountain paradise, I should feel the imprisoning barriers. To-day, when I looked at the magnificent Hunnenfluhe, lifting up its rocky ramparts, not made by man, and embodying the idea of an antediluvian fortress, high and mighty, that had resisted the sweeping waves of the deluge, I thought of Abyssinia and wished for a chasm in the mountains, through which I could look into the far-off country, and see the purple haze floating over the guessed-at distance.

Jumbled up this evening towards the head of the valley, and renewed acquaintance with its

rocks and cataracts. Gave a passing bow to the Schmadribach, kissed hands to the Silverhorn, and crossed a field or two to say "good day" to the Trimblebach, who received our courtesies with her accustomed turbulence. Nothing daunted by her scorn, we looked in boldly at her through an aperture in the rocks, and as she whisked round proudly, pronounced her fierce, original, and worth a thousand Staubachs.

After all, the Staubach is a poor thing. This is high treason, I know,—hanging matter in the valley,—but true, nevertheless. I have it now before my window, with its eight hundred feet long shower of dust, neither throwing off its waters in one unbroken volume, nor dashing them against opposing rocks according to established rules, but flying off in a light column of spray, to be blown about as the winds list, and to look very like (be it gently whispered) the overturned contents of a most capacious dust-cart.

We have this moment heard that letters wait for us at Unterseen:—letters! O the magic of two little syllables! The necromancy of inanimate nature is nothing to the dear and tender spell contained within the narrow folds of a letter. When the rain fell this evening in torrents, I regretted the obstacle which it threw in the way of

our projected excursion over the Wenghern Alp, but since the sound of a letter, a long wished-for one, has rung in my ears, I have thanked the skies for sending us back again to Interlacken.

What could people have done before postmen and post-offices were invented, and when pedlars and pilgrims were the only calendars of the outward world to which the feudal lords and their gentle ladies could have recourse? when the young lover's death was rarely known, until the beauty whose cruelty had caused it had grown gray, and the bold knight returned in his old age to dislodge the heir, who had been willingly paying masses for his soul for the third part of a century?

I never shall forget having been once up in the mountain of the Dole, or, I should rather say, in the village of St. Cergue under it, when a letter-carrier rang at the gate of the parsonage; the flutter and anxiety which his appearance caused brought Cowper's fine passage to my mind, and I have always thought of it since whenever I have seen a country postman, that connecting link between the solitary dweller in the mountains and the far-off haunts of man. All the interests which the inhabitant of a capital finds diffused in courts and clubs, operas and theatres; in splendid saloons, galleries of art, epicurean feasts, and poli-

tical discussions, are concentrated within the compass of a letter, or the leaves of a new book. These are the only mediums through which the form and pressure of the living world can be transmitted to him who stands on the outside of the great wall, but who, if he be a politician, or a man of letters, or one who has mixed fondly with society and remembers it with regret, must still have many feelings and anxieties in common with the bustling world which he has quitted. Thus reflecting on post-offices and postmen, we returned to Interlacken "over the boots," for the rain had in a few hours converted the coronetted Unspunnen* into a tower of mist, and swelled the Lutschine into a fierce and boiling river, tearing and foaming over what was yesterday a grassy bank.

Interlacken—the fresh and pastoral Interlacken, is as full of idlers as an English watering-place. I have already spoken with sorrow of its lodging-houses. Alas! it has its flys† and beaus,—*exquisites* of all countries, who contrive to preserve a certain town air under the broad straw hat and Alpine jacket of rural proportions, and to

* The romantic ruins of a castle in the valley between Interlacken and Lauterbrunnen.

† The well-known Brighton vehicle.

discuss the wonders of nature as if they were opera decorations! The country suffers in its sequestered and romantic character by this inundation of stragglers, many of whom seem to find, in the bustle and variety of a table d'hôte, the true picturesque of Switzerland. We tried it once; but a crowd, bent on eating, and shooting out their feelers as the dishes were carried swiftly by, varied by the romantic aspect of a spirited youth, doing the hunter of the Alps, in a green jacket and a cap becomingly placed over one ear, or a sentimental Celadon drinking delicious poison from the bright eyes which a happy chance had placed opposite to him, had nothing of interest to compensate for its tedious length and elbowing pressure. Yet this was a white day too of its kind. Our own party was strong, and chance gave to me as my next neighbour a very agreeable Englishman of distinction, who possessed in a remarkable degree the unaffected simplicity of manners so frequently found in alliance with decided talent. This gentleman, together with a lady and her husband (his friends), were, with ourselves, the only English in the crowd; a green-vested hunter, pilgrim, and lover (the last despairingly) excepted. The rest was made up as usual: three or four stragglers from Paris,—three or four more from

Lyons, and among them the *remains* of Elleviou, the opera Lothario of former times—a *préfet's* wife, round and red as a harvest-moon, discussing in a honied voice her "châteaux," and her "terres," and in her train one fair daughter. "O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hast thou!"—so thought poor green-jacket, who sat puffing away his soul in sighs to his bright particular star, while she turned away her very fine eyes in another direction, with that graceful reserve for which young French women are remarkable. Time-limited travellers, eating copiously, quickly, and silently, and observers of character taking sketches à la Vauvenargues, or à la Rochefoucault, as their wit prompted, with the addition of some odds and ends of live lumber, filled up the table.

Our friends left us this morning to meet again (I hope) in some sweet nook of the Como lake, and we took a char-à-banc after an early breakfast, and drove up the valley to Grindelwald. The first part of the drive was familiar to us; it is the same that leads to Lauterbrunnen, but a little below the junction of the Black Lutschine and the White, the road turns off to the left into another valley, not of so magnificent a bearing as that of Lauterbrunnen, but bold and beautiful,

very beautiful, (I thought,) and closed up by the white giants of Grindelwald, amazingly splendid, with the broad sun wooing them, and turning their icicles into diamonds.

There is no place from which the indolent or infirm traveller can make acquaintance, and intimate acquaintance too, with glaciers and their colossal sentinels, with less expense of bodily fatigue than at Grindelwald.

The windows of the inn look upon both the great and little glacier, and both are attainable, to those who wish to examine their glittering frost-work more in detail, by a short and easy path. Grindelwald reposes in the green crater of encircling mountains, which surround it so as to shut up all visible issue, and looks fertile and smiling through the grand Eigher, and the Viescherhorn, and the Mettenberg; and I know not how many more giants stand round it, and pour their frozen torrents into its bosom.

The felons from Berne were certainly not the shepherds whom we should have expected to meet in the sweet valley of the Lutschine; it was enough to provoke a saint, to see their zebra dresses (the badge of their infamy) spread out on a flower-enamelled bank, where eight or ten of those hardened culprits had thrown themselves, to

rest for a while from the fatigues of road-mending. I could have put up with a repose of banditti, after the fashion of Salvator or Pinelli; but a common jail delivery, a group of squalid wretches, in whom vice had ceased to be awful, and whose degradation excited only disgust,—whipped and branded criminals, in whom even the spirit of ferocious courage seemed extinguished, —what an accompaniment for lowing herds and flowery meadows!

A peculiar kind of cheese is manufactured in this valley, and sent all over the country in monstrous masses, weighing a hundred and fifty or two hundred pounds each. Our young party went into a chalet to inspect some of those odorous and curdy abominations, that make what we familiarly call a cheese, dwindle into a mere liliputian luxury; while I pleased myself with looking at the kine, gravely ruminating on a gentle bank near to their stable, and jingling their sweet bells most tunefully. There is both prayer and thanksgiving in this mountain vesper, at least to my ear; I have heard anthems, and organs, and loud hosannas, which have failed to touch my heart with the deep and devotional feeling that sometimes absorbs it wholly, when I hear the sound of bells at evening in a mountain solitude.

Scarcely arrived at Interlacken, when we were serenaded by three blind cobblers, who sang the *ranz des vaches* and other mountain melodies in perfection, but their scientific efforts were dreadful. —N.B. Mountain minstrels ought not to be cobblers, but shepherds, or goatherds, or something of a pastoral calling. The herdsman is in reality pretty much of the same clay and moulding as the village shoemaker, but every thing connected with his mode of life, whether rude or poetical, has the primeval stamp upon it. We remember that kings were shepherds, and that it was to shepherds "abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night," that the messenger of the Lord was sent to announce the birth of the Redeemer. These antique and holy recollections confer a kind of dignity on the rough capote and knotted crook, with which nothing can invest a tailor or a shoemaker; the awl and leather apron savour too much of town work and its vulgar unhealthy associations.

The high gossip of Interlacken turns at present on the marriage of one of the singing women of Brientz with a wealthy bookseller of Leipsic; the damsel plain, dull, and twenty-one; the lover, plain also, learned, and forty-five. Two years ago he heard her sing as she rowed him to the

Ghiesbach,—thought such notes worth cultivating,—placed her at a school, paid in advance,—and forgot her. A short time since he came again to the mountains, and expressing a wish to hear the singers whose wild warblings had formerly delighted him, was told that the chief nightingale was silent. A stranger (it was said) who had passed that way two years before, had noticed the poor girl, interested himself in her improvement, in short, awakened hopes too fondly cherished, and then forsaken her. The bookseller was touched, conscience and heart, wooed the fair inamorata, and won her; then came *noces et festin*,—such a bridal as was never before witnessed in the shades of Interlacken—such eating and drinking, and dancing; meal after meal, waltz after waltz, and the English travellers monopolizing (for the time being) all the beauty of the district, and whirling round the velvet boddices and silver bodkins till two or three o'clock in the morning.

CHAPTER X.

BRIENTZ — MEYRINGHEN — THE BRUNIG — LUNGERN.

I HAD no idea that Brientz was so pretty as it really is, when I looked at it from the opposite shore. The waters of the lake swell up to the cottage doors, and ripple against the fences of the little gardens, making fairy bays divided by soft green promontories, one with its church and another with its dwellings, in that sweet and gentle style of colouring which one loves as one does a fire-side virtue, better than showier things sometimes.

There is a sort of cart-road from Interlacken to Meyringhen; but we preferred taking a boat as far as the village of Brientz, and a char-à-banc from thence to the Hasli valley. This paradise of the Swiss houris puts on rather an ungracious aspect, as it is approached from the lake. Shut in between two rocky chains, scarred by the gray

and stony tracks of the winter torrents, which seem to carry all before them, and divided into small enclosures, separated by naked wooden fences repeated to monotony, it looked, with the help of a lurid sky, very raw and rather forbidding. As we gained upon Meyringhen the scene improved, and the rocky ramparts to the right were softened down by rich draperies of wood, in which the beech led brightly. Our driver, an intelligent savage, with a scared Otaheitan eye and an amazing ardour, did not spare us a single rill. At every thread of water that filtered through the rocks, he turned round exultingly and hollaed out its rough name. The Swiss of all ranks have a strong susceptibility of the grand and the beautiful in natural objects. Their wild and wonderful country is not thrown away upon them; they love their lonely mountains, and talk of their valleys with a feeling almost devotional, but when they run into improvements it is all over with taste or nature; witness the frequent cabbage garden, stuck all round with slight poles gaily painted, and finished at top by a gilt ball, or some other equally appropriate ornament. I have detected artificial rockwork and leaden cupids on the very banks of the Aar, and have growled over urns of box and juniper vases in the exquisite valley of Sarnen.

No beds to be had at the inn at Meyringhen, but we found very animated ones in a supplementary cottage. Strolled about, and saw some beautiful children, and two or three women with regular features and soft complexions, tall, pale, and fair, but not beauties, or an approach to it. They have a *name*, which is half the battle; few people like to oppose a long received opinion, especially when they have no interest in so doing, and thus the fair ones of Meyringhen have passed into goddesses, because they are taller and less rugged (and certainly a finer race) than the sun-dried females of the surrounding districts.

A guide from the mountains returning to Arth, begged a passage in our boat yesterday, which we of course granted. He showed us several certificates given to him by various persons to whom he had served as guide in the Oberlands, and amongst others a letter from the Miss P——'s, daughters of Lord L——, sent to him after their return to England, and enclosing a drawing of their family mansion. There is usually an odour of display about these sort of things; they are generally put out as vouchers, not only for the fidelity of the guides, but for the eloquence and condescension of the writers. But this letter was so cordially kind, "si simplement simple," that

when I read it I grew national, and was glad that it had been written by a fair young Englishwoman, or a bevy of them. The guides are in general good people, honest, kind, and fearless; but it is the fashion to lard them with praise, as if the panegyric was part payment, and the panegyrized a Hannibal, or some equally mighty masterer of mountains. This letter pleased me because it was natural, and evidently not meant for exhibition, and that is such praise as the world goes!

Too much fog to-day for the Grimsel, so we did a foolish thing; fancied that we ought to see the Brunig again; passed over it, and after dining rather meagrely at Lungern, and listening to long stories from an obtrusive waiter,—first about his own education at Frybourg and consequent attainments, and then about the wealth and importance of the people of his valley, who are all ladies and gentlemen, and have balls in the winter, — returned back to Meyringhen, after a ride more fatiguing and less beautiful than we thought it on our first visit. And yet there are some fine snatches of forest scenery in this lonely Brunig, and a noble supremacy of beech, and the deep green waters, and fairy shores of Lungern are always lovely. But it was altogether less bright and beautiful than the glowing miniature we had

framed in our memories. On the whole, the first impression was weakened, and this risk of rubbing out or deadening a sunny recollection, is certainly against a second visit to scenes which one has fallen in love with on a first. Perhaps it may be a question as to objects, where the sky and its influences are concerned; but for the immutable beauties of marble and canvass, I am still quite sure that the appetite "grows by what it feeds on."

We did not put Sarnen to the test, but left it in our minds alive in its loveliness, as we saw it once when we took that ineffable ride from Lungern along the banks of those fairy lakes to Saxeln, and saw the very showy church, with its Italian profusion of marbles and gilding; the stern Pilate,* I remember, stood before us, and Pontius, hung against the wall in most harsh black and white, in the act of flinging himself into the lake on its summit;—so goes the mountain tradition.

It was on that same evening, as we wandered about in the churchyard of Lungern, looking at the tombs decorated with buds and flowers and medallions wrought in iron, painted and gilt according to the wealth, vanity, or affectionate feelings of the survivors, that we met two hand-

* Mont Pilate.

some young women, inhabitants of Meyringhen, going onwards to their village just as the day declined. I remember expressing my surprise at their venturing through the solitary forests of the Brunig at so late an hour, for they could not have expected to reach Meyringhen till long after midnight. But our guides assured us that the most lonely path might be traversed at any hour in safety; midnight, they said, was the same as mid-day. I thought of Moore's exquisite "rich and rare." Those girls, too, had their jewels of silver and jewels of gold superadded to their beauty, which provoketh thieves sooner than either, as we are told by high authority; but went their way fearlessly, in darkness and in solitude, sure to arrive unharmed. This is a cheering view of human nature, a setting off against the zebras of Grindelwald. It was charming to think of it, and to know that there is even now a spot, and a lovely one, where innocence is still held sacred, and honesty a plant of natural growth, an innate feeling, not only theoretically reputable, but actually practised. I had a notion that this same honesty was a grafted virtue, like truth and temper, two qualities in which children in an unsophisticated state are usually deficient; but I was thinking, I suppose, of the pilfering Indians, or

those tricking children of nature and coveters of glass beads and pen-knives, the Sandwich Islanders, and willingly give up my hypothesis as fanciful, and perhaps unjust; for I know of few feelings more delightful than the kindly one which a favourable view of human nature diffuses over the mind, nor any to which the heart clings more fondly. Yet why should I conclude that the people of this valley are uninstructed; have they not their pastors and their elders? And so, after all my golden reveries, and returns to primitive innocence, and innate principle, this same admirable probity may be still the virtue of education. So much for woman's logic, oftener the logic of the heart than of the head; and yet how does it happen, that with reasoning powers so weak, and the misleading lights of imagination and feeling so strong, women are usually the best counsellors that men find through life?

Went to bed tired. A soft female voice sung like a Benshee under my window for an hour or two, stilling a child to sleep, with a few low melancholy notes, repeated at short intervals, sometimes taken up in a sharp key, and then sinking again into the mournful minor.

We passed several hours this morning, lingering about the falls of the Reichenbach, and thought

them beautiful, more beautiful than when we had first seen them through the prelusive mists of an approaching storm. The upper fall may be thought, perhaps, in its dark and lonely amphitheatre, too bare and unembellished, but the leap is bold, and the scene not wanting in stern unfrittered dignity. It is not so lovely as the Ghiesbach, but it is impressive; the one is a professed beauty, the other a Sybil in her cave. I should like it better if it could be seen from the green knoll, without the ceremony of entering the pavilion: there is a smell of humbug about it, an arranged surprise, that always defeats the purposed end; besides, we love to judge from our own impressions, and not to have our admiration extorted like tribute-money, even though it may lawfully belong to Cæsar. But in fact, the ever-falling spray renders the bank so plashy, that it would be impossible to stand long upon it, or at all, without getting a complete shower-bath. The whole of the descent is beautiful, following the course of the stream through velvet meadows, overhung by and overhanging the foaming Reichenbach, which forms as it falls eight or nine cascades of various beauty. One that gushes through a chasm in the rocks, curtained by foliage, sparkles like a diamond shower; another flies off into three distinct

branches, and takes, from this caprice, its name of the Petit Schaffhausen. The lower fall, too, is a sweet thing, so fresh and poetical; I dare say the fairies dance there when the moon shines, and make charmed circles in the grass, to keep away unhallowed footsteps.

From many points of the descent the Hasli scenery is brought out to the best advantage, and the too straight river, with its marshy accompaniments (an unpleasing feature from some of the high grounds) is never nakedly obtrusive.

I wish the soft green banks, on which at every weary step, or sweet opening, one is tempted to repose, were not so full of insect life; but they are alarmingly "populous and vital." It is impossible to bestow one's weariness on one of those fresh sofas, which nature has spread out so invitingly, without fear and trembling. Yesterday our guide killed a large snake, just as it had trailed its lazy length across our path, thinking, I suppose, that the sun was shining for its particular pleasure. But the leviathan of insects was a grasshopper, that made its way into our apartment at Grindelwald. It was much larger than the largest sized prawn, indeed a nearer approach to an infant crayfish, and by its heavy gait (its quality of grasshopper considered), probably as old as the flood,

and as conversant in grasses as Nebuchadnezzar; and then its armour clattered like the "royal Dane's"* and had moreover a very suspicious sulphury glare upon it. Altogether, the stuff was there for a very passable ghost-story, with the help of a gray twilight and some black embroidery. Our nocturnal visitor (spectre, swallow, or bat) of Berne, of whose intrusion I (for wise reasons) have made no note, was of a more ungentle leaven. Its gibberings were not so speedily put an end to as the visit of the venerable green knight, who mildly suffered himself to be shown out at the window, with a dignified composure worthy the Nestor of the grasses.

What frights the belles of Meyringhen make of themselves, when they tie the vile red handkerchief over their foreheads like sick soldiers, hiding their fine hair, and altering their genteel oval-shaped faces into short ones. The other handkerchief too, pinned flat before, from the throat to the waist, effacing all pretension to roundness of form and equalising all shapes, is peculiarly unbecoming. The straw hat alone is pretty; it has a jaunty air, that suits the collar, or rather stock, of black velvet, with which these fair ones conceal their

* I fear that I have no authority for the clatter.

throats. In this dress they have, I will not say an Amazonian air, but an independent bearing, that has something really grand in it. They look (and so do the men) as if proud of their traditionary origin, and seem to consider themselves as a race apart. The ruins of Resti are always in view, and keep up the recollection of the Swedish prince, who, settling (I have forgotten why) in the Hasli valley with his followers, has the credit of being the founder of this fine people; for such they certainly are, though overrated. Just as I had scribbled the last word, three very handsome women grouped themselves opposite to my window, as if to redeem their countrywomen's reputation for individual beauty, and now a fourth passes with undeniable credentials. In return, myriads of ugly ones are afloat, and a sprinkling of large-headed, idiot-looking children, not confirmed cretins, but with all the external signs of imperfect intellect, and enfeebled health.

The Swiss, planted as they are between Italy and France, which have each a foot in their territory, have nothing in common with either nation as far as concerns the exterior. Nothing can be less French than a fair Swiss, unless it be a brown one. The light complexioned are more like the Scotch; they have a fresh, cold, clear look; the

brown have not the rich eyes or mobility of countenance of the French; they are heavier and produce less effect even when they happen to have better features. It is astonishing with what poor tools a French girl contrives to make herself pretty, or at least to seem so; a Swiss peasant has no idea of this, she is as nature made her; if a thought of display crosses her mind, it is expressed coarsely, it is the "cow dancing the courant,"—but in her simplicity she is often dignified. The women who work in the fields are in both countries black and baked, but when a French girl can afford to be smart, she asks but a pair of eyes, and the rest (usually coarse stuff) is somehow or other passed off by their eloquence. Both have frequently an expression of broad good humour, but in the one it is more personal, in the other more expansive.

Nor do the Swiss differ less from their other neighbours, the Italians. There is sometimes a serious earnestness, an undressed fixedness of thought in the expression of an Italian countenance that is fine and natural, and a character of simple goodness. One occasionally meets with a childish sparkle in some of the young faces, charming in its way; many are vacant and heavy, some hideous, from features, expression, and nastiness; but in the villages and vineyards one not unfre-

quently sees single figures, and even groupes, that look as if they had sat in Egypt under the tents of the patriarchs, and had come along with the stream of time without a breath on their freshness, in all the natural grandeur and decent boldness of antique simplicity,—with a purity of outline, and a breadth and richness of drapery and colouring worthy of the old masters who painted with the book of Genesis open before them. I have never met with this style of figure in Switzerland; beauty is here rosy, quaint, round; or if of a higher cast, (which is rare) apt to verge on the masculine or the stern.

As a Swiss valley, this of Hasli may be called fine but not first-rate; any where else but in Switzerland it would be *number one*. It has comfortable dwellings and a prosperous air, the very reverse of beautiful Lauterbrunnen, where the cottages (with a few carved and painted exceptions) are good only for sketch-books. Hemp, flax, and potatoes are the staple commodities here; the enclosures are separated by a slight wooden palisade, with a gate always open, but troops of boys and girls run before your char-à-banc and close it just in time to fling it back again with prodigious fracas as you approach. This is one of their most effective means of obtaining batz; but flowers,

crystals, wooden spoons, even hats full of common stones, vouched for as first-rate mineralogical specimens, are forced upon you with vehement and speech-supplying gestures, that will not be refused.

A faithful and general instinct brought home the mountain wanderers, domesticated for the time being at Meyringhen, from their respective rambles half an hour before dinner, served, for their accommodation, at the un-Alpine hour of five. White poles and straw hats thrown aside, and drawing-room airs assumed, we all congregated in the salle, some meditating *montagnes à la neige*, and others anticipating *truites à la Genevoise*. A French family of rank (as we understood) gave us a slight course of domestic bickering. Such things are always best carried on with the door shut; but the party was composed of the very elements of strife,—an old man, a youngish wife, and a companion of either sex. The rest of the company had just come over the Grimsel and talked of the Handeck in raptures, which has sharpened the edge of our curiosity most inconveniently, for alas! the rain descends, the winds rave, the cataracts roar, and the storm, whose anticipated violence detained us here to-day, is performing its promise like a person of honour,—principal and interest all paid off at once.

Saturday.—The puffing and blowing deities all against us, and the weeping ones too. No Handeck to-day; so we have called a council of war, and relying on the allowedly infallible judgment of the guides, &c., who composed it, have decided on trying the chance of another day.

Horrified a party, (not an English one) this morning, by talking of a walk over the Grimsel as a feasible thing, and speaking with irreverent lightness of the Scheideck and the Wenghern Alp, of which they seemed to think with horror,—such as Psyche probably felt when she first got a peep of the infernal regions, or Gray when he looked into the "tremendous jaws" of Borrowdale. I asked an effeminate looking person, "pale, melancholy, and gentlemanlike," who sat next me, if he intended visiting the Handeck:—"O mon Dieu, non, madame, je n'ai pas assez de courage pour cela," was the answer, uttered in a tone of polite irony. When I said that our young party had traversed the mountains from Lauterbrunnen to Andermatt on foot, the whole group seemed to look upon us as monstrous and outlandish things, on a par with the eight-legged foal, or the happy possessor of the seven-leagued boots—the illustrious Poucet.

Nerves are still *sometimes* cultivated in France as a feminine accomplishment; it is still thought

interesting to start at imaginary danger, and incompatible with womanly delicacy to encounter severe fatigue, or hazard vulgar casualties. Yet these very females, who would have shrunk back with terror from our imperial grasshopper of Grindelwald, sustained the horrors of a revolution and the hopelessness of exile, with a firmness of mind and a cheerfulness of spirit worthy the best of the Romans.

It is tedious to watch the skies from an inn window for two whole days, even though a mountain, garnished with three cascades, form its vis-à-vis. Their gentle murmur (but this, the closed window and distance considered, I *suppose*, rather than *hear*) and perpetual motion are unconquerably soporific; *almost* unconquerably, I should say, for I do contrive to keep my eyes open, though they begin to tire of gazing through the rain at the free step and lion port of the Hasli beauties, who tread as firmly as if they had something less sharp than flint to step upon. The pointed pavement of the street at Meyringhen is a positive ordeal to the uninitiated, though possibly it may be the distinction, to which it owes the honour of being called a town.

Bad weather is a dull thing every where, but bad weather in Switzerland is dulness trebly dis-

tilled. All the radiance of its scenery depends on a bright sky; obscure it, and its mountain regions are Ossian's poetry embodied,—mists, torrents, airy halls, or at least rocks, that, seen through the gray clouds, may well pass for them. The aspect of nature here is often stern and gloomy, and always susceptible, from the naked grandeur of its forms and its remote and lonely character, of being made so by a troubled sky. Neither do the inhabitants lend much animation to the scene. They move about with a contented, but heavy and joyless air, as if they had just enough of comfort for home consumption, but nothing of gaiety for general use. The towns of *real* Switzerland (la Suisse Allemande) have a marked character of gloom. In the better kind of villages, and particularly in the canton of Berne, there seems an abundant distribution of all that can most essentially contribute to the comfort and reasonable enjoyment of life; yet the people do not seem more mirthfully disposed than the shivering inhabitants of the poorer and more sterile districts, where hunger and thirst take a palpable form. They are happier, no doubt; their sleek faces and plump contours denote the power of indulgence duly exercised. But one may be as rotund as the fat bull of Basan, and have butter, cream, honey, and savoury cheese looking

out from every pore, without having one ray of hilarity, one sunbeam of gladness communicated to the features. The quiet gaiety of a coterie of French peasants, gathered in gossiping groupes round their doors at night, or sitting on long benches sewing and spinning with a neighbourly air while the daylight holds, and then clustering together for an hour or two after twilight, like sworn cronies, discussing with temperate ardour the home politics of their little world, while the girls dance or thread the Spanish needle, would be exhilirating as a picture, even if the heart had nothing to do with it, which I am very far from thinking.

A warm sun, a long summer, and a fertile soil naturally awaken a quick susceptibility of enjoyment, and create a feeling of security about the actual means of existence, rarely precarious when an abundant nature is aided by even moderate industry. The French peasant has still much of the old *gaieté de cœur*, once attributed to the nation in general, but no longer evident amongst the higher classes, who are decidedly a grave, reflecting, though pleasure-loving people. But the vicinity of lowering mountains, the protracted winter, the unthawing snows, the melancholy rush of many waters continually overwhelming their natural

boundaries, the obstacles which nature interposes between man and man, and which stand in the way of all social intercourse and cheerful communication, may perhaps account for the anxious and melancholy expression by which the inhabitants of a mountain country are usually distinguished. The Alpine shepherd bears the impress of the solitude in which he lives; he leads his flock up to the high pastures, and shares the desert with the wild deer and the eagle. A tender, devout, and meditative nature becomes, in those awful and boundless wilds, mystical and visionary; hence the illusion of second sight, and other mountain superstitions. A dark and fearful mind sees heaven in its avenging moments and rushes into the horrors of fanaticism; while the ordinary shepherd, whose whole thoughts are occupied in guarding his flock from the season's penalty, who hears none but wild and melancholy sounds, and sees only the changeful heaven, and the unchangeable mountains of which it makes its footstool, soon loses the gaiety of the plains. Perhaps his perceptions of the sublime and powerful in nature, may be stronger than those of a ploughman or a vine-dresser, but is his enjoyment of its casual blessings so lively or acute?

But there is one gay race at least in Switzerland, —the servant girls at the country inns. They

are not likely to be so embarrassing to the guests from their excess of charms, as the fair Valaisannes were to the too inflammable St. Preux; but they are in general good humoured, and sometimes good looking lasses, and happy ones too, having many indulgences and immunities. Privileged to be gay and familiar with the guests, they are soon talked into a happy conceit of their charms by those wandering youths for whom it is their duty to perform kind offices; while those amongst them who possess the spirit of calculation, speculate upon the matrimonial tendencies of the German waiters, and indulge in sunny anticipations of one day ruling, in bulky dignity, over the Golden Lion, or the Rising Sun, the Eagle, or the Crown, or something else of equally soaring and dominative sound. A girl at the inn at Interlacken, whose fleetness had gained her the appellation of the Chamois, was as gay, and nearly as genteel as any of the legitimate Nanettes or Nanines on the other side of the Jura. It was a pretty thing to see her shooting by, as if she just touched the ground out of mere civility, pretty, and rare too; for the merriest here have, after all, more of lead than quicksilver about them.

Doctor Toralva, of whom the renowned Don Quixote makes honourable mention, made only

twelve hours' work of the distance between Madrid and Rome, witnessed the death of the Cardinal de Bourbon, and was back again next morning to tell his story. I wish we had the secret of his "appliances and means," for here we stick, kicking, mentally and uselessly, against the elements; calling upon Jupiter, who does not pay us the slightest attention, and without even the wheel to put our shoulders to. What is to be done? our wee wee stock of books is exhausted, every page conned over; heart, spirit, and life squeezed out, the very words got by rote undesignedly; nothing in short left undissected, but Rogers's "Italy," and *that* I reserve to dwell upon in Italy itself. I love this beautiful thing, it breathes a perfume of condensed sweets that come upon one like the soft south; its tone and colouring, its spirit and feeling, belong entirely to the land of memory and imagination, the fair and sunny Italy. But thinking of its sunshine will not brighten our dull skies, or carpet the raw bed-chamber in which we sit; one finishing a sketch, another scribbling a journal, a third taking refuge in a guide-book; laughing, growling, gossiping, and very merry in spite of the elements. Yesterday I counted on having a cold to take care of by way of pastime, and went to bed with all the fore-runners; but this morning it had vanished.

I don't know how it happens, but in travelling one does every thing with impunity; bad food, extremes of heat and cold, and what is worse, sudden transitions from one to the other, starvation, repletion, deleterious wines, &c. are hourly dared without evil results. The counter-poisons are (I suppose), continual movement and change of air, new scenes and the work they give to the mind; no time for mental lassitude or bodily idleness (except in a few stray moments, such as these we have now upon our hands); the acute, yet not too acute, sense of enjoyment, and the absence of those social and extended anxieties which hang about even the happiest home.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HASLI GRUND — THE HANDECK — THE GRIMSEL — HOSPICE OF THE GRIMSEL — MEYRINGHEN — INTERLACKEN — SWISS MOUNTAINS — BERNE.

SUNDAY.—A dull day, and cloudy, but a bit of blue in one corner; put our trust in it, and set out for the Grimsel. Sky still threatening, but the infallible bit of blue kept its promise. A divine day, and a delightful pass from Meyringhen to the Hasli Grund, rich in oaks and full of beauty. Looked about for the rent in the rocks through which we had once peeped at this same Hasli Grund, as one does through a glass at a scene in an opera; it is a very odd peep, and exceedingly pretty. The Aar, in an agreeable fit of petulance, forces its way through the rocks which divide the valleys, and leaves them to serve as a telescope for curious gazers. The first burst of the Hasli Grund is very striking; a soft pasto-

ral ridge nearly encircles it, and is again framed in by mountains and rocks, admirably jagged and shattered, and thrown up loftily from a rich forest base. As we rode slowly down the winding path, we met numerous parties of country folk, in their smart sabbath gear, ascending to the church at Meyringhen; some grave, some merry, but chiefly staid family groupes with their gayer off-shoots, forming a succession of lively clever pictures, as they appeared and disappeared with the windings of the road or filed along the open level. The young women were generally handsome, tall, and erect, with an air of inoffensive boldness, if boldness in woman can be inoffensive,—in educated woman it unquestionably cannot; it is the true antidote to the witchery of beauty. But the mountain peasant ought not to be judged by the same criterion; her open unabashed air seems more the result of a healthy fearlessness of mind than of habitual impudence. It is not as with a female in polished life, a barrier overleaped, but an ignorance of evil, and of the possibility of misconception.

As we ascended along the edge of a rocky defile, through which the Aar forces a turbulent passage, the scene swelled into magnificence, or roughened into savage wildness. Here we were

joined by two travellers from Meyringhen, who proved a most agreeable addition to our party. Stopped at Gattenau, half way between Meyringhen and the Grimsel, to give our horses some refreshment. A benighted traveller might pass a night at the little inn not uncomfortably.

At every step as we advanced towards the Handeck the scene blackened, and the road, or rather track, always alarmingly bad, became almost awfully so. At length the roaring of the cataract made itself heard above the surrounding torrents; we alighted from our horses, and a few minutes' walk brought us within view of this sublime exuberance of nature. But the front view is not the finest; it is from the upper ledge, where the eye takes in at once both the headlong Aar, leaping exultingly from its rocky bondage and burying itself in the vanishing depths below, and the mountain torrent that comes down laughing and sparkling, and throwing about its shower of pulverized diamonds, mixing and contrasting their whiteness with the troubled foam of the great waters, that the scene is developed in all its lonely glory. I have heard it said that the accompaniments are defective, but I cannot think so; surely the stern defile, the awful depth of perpendicular rock, the scathed pine, and the eternal glacier,

become it well; like the desolation that frames in Rome, and accords so finely with its ruins and its recollections. No pastoral valley, no peopled glen, or sunny upland, however lovely in its brightness, could combine so *feelingly* with the lonely Handeck as the stony desert in which nothing but itself has life, or the stern chaos of rocks that crowd about it, like the unshapen elements of a just-awakened world.

A deepening solitude, vast granite deserts with a narrow, steep, and dangerous path winding through them, sometimes overhanging a dizzy abyss, deep, abrupt, and fearful, and barred up at the other side by natural walls of gigantic bearing, continues to the Grimsel. Often the path is so narrow as scarcely to leave room for the steady track of the sagacious horse; not unfrequently it passes over the bare smooth rock, indented at intervals to render it rugged, or cut into steep and irregular stairs. In many parts a false step might be fatal, but the horses are so sure-footed, that when left to themselves no accident ever occurs. "And does no accident ever occur (a timid traveller might ask) in crossing the fierce flood, over bridges of loose planks, without a fence of any kind?" It is true, the bridges have peril in their air, but the danger is purely

imaginary, and they are so much in the spirit of the scene that one can hardly wish for an additional barrier.

Amy stopped to make a sketch of a single arch of rough stone thrown over the torrent at its most turbulent point. Here the progress of nature seems arrested. The pine, which has hitherto borne itself loftily, rises but a few inches above the ground, and then, as if suddenly checked in its ascent, spreads out in a circular form. But even this sickly sign of vegetable life soon ceases. Huge masses of granite, enough to build a hundred imperial cities, choke up the dreary valley; over which earthquake and deluge, "the great winding-sheets that bury all things in oblivion," seem to have spread their banefulness. What a country for the geologist!—but to me who know nothing of the *ologies*, who am altogether ignorant of the sweet science and mystery of lichens; to whom gypsum is Hebrew, and who can hardly tell limestone from sandstone; to me, in short, who dare not mention the word strata, and have no other name for the starved yellow flower that represents Flora in this bleak region, than mere marigold; it is only a gray desert, long, and drear, and uniform, but solemn and original,—a chaotic and forgotten nature, made and left in anger. A

funeral procession winding slowly along might produce a strange effect here, perhaps an awful one; yet it may be better—more thrilling, in its loneliness. For hours the same monotony of colouring, of form, of sound prevails. At length a rugged path, marked by tall poles, winds round the rocks, and leads the traveller to that climax of desolation, the Hospice of the Grimsel, standing like Elizabeth's Siberian hut amidst the nakedness of nature, barred in by lofty rocks, that take the aspect of colossal domes, or are hollowed into gloomy amphitheatres. A little lake, deep and still,—a roaring torrent, unceasing rain, and one lone habitation! O what a world of love it would take to illumine this desolate waste,—this almost Cimmerian darkness! The botanist, indeed, might find among the scentless things that linger between the stony masses, some long sought-for specimen. And even the unlearned eye looks with pleasure upon the many tinted lichens, that spread their map-like figures over the surface of the rocks, giving a kind of artificial verdure to a scene which, but for their intervention, would be all one melancholy gray. How the goats find browsing, or where, they know best; but here they are, in troops; the old ones with a venerable length of beard, streaming (after the fashion of Gray's bard)

like a meteor, poised on a pointed crag, and making grave eyes at the more skittish young ones, who are remarkably spirited and beautiful; just the kind of animal life that becomes this savage solitude. Three chamois, shy, gentle-looking things, with wild beautiful eyes, follow quietly the goats that nourish them; they are four months old, and will probably be off to their Alpine recesses as soon as they have strength to make their escape.

Mutton cutlets; mutton roast, hashed, boiled, and fried; potatoes in their coats and out of them, and an omelet, which a convivial monk (such things have been) would call a savoury compromise between the enjoined fast and the desired indulgence,—what manna in the desert! We were wound up by a ride of ten hours to bread and cheese, and our homely fare seemed to us a repast to which Lucullus might have sat down glorifying; but our male companions were not exactly of the same opinion, and ordered an auxiliary bowl of punch, ("my yellow damask, Foible, to set off my ordinary petticoat"); so we left them to their devices and retired to our cells, separated from each other only by a thin partition, so thin indeed, that every word uttered in one was not only audible in the next, but half over the house.

Started up at half-past four, awakened by a trampling and bustle under my window. It was the milking of the goats; but such a dreary dawn, —drizzling rain, cold clouds, the rocks dripping, the lake smoking, and the girls of the Hospice splashing through stream and pool to their early occupations. These poor nymphs are not dainty, but habit soon brings the Persian carpet and the oozing sod to the same level.

We left the deserts of the Grimsel in their morning dress—(I should think they seldom make a second toilette), and hailed the sun that soon after burst out joyously upon us. Looking back beyond the Hospice towards St. Gothard, all seemed one "boundless contiguity" of rock; but we greatly regretted not having so arranged matters as to have passed the Furca, seen the glaciers of the Rhone, and looked once more upon the glorious valley of the Haute Reuss (the *supreme* valley, I should almost say). Glaciers in this relentless desert must produce an astounding effect. Great work for the eye, and the mind too; and to have seen the Rhone issuing from its inexhaustible bed, and traced with the inward eye its various course through all its turbulent and gentle evolutions, would have been interesting. And so it would be to see Athens, or Jerusalem, or Bagdad

(for the sake of the thousand-and-one), or the great wall of China; but a craving mind must set up a boundary somewhere, so we turned from the armed hostilities of nature to retrace our steps towards her green elysiums.

As we advanced, we met many pedestrians labouring onwards; but not all labouring, for some affected to give their staffs a sinecure, and bounded along, dashing through every unruly torrent like bold Leanders, who would have made a joke of the Hellespont. It is true, that for those who can use their feet the pass of the Grimsel is nothing, it is only for equestrians by compulsion, like myself, that it looks grim, and throws off a few horrors. How like a vile pun that *grim* sounds, but as I am innocent of all punning intentions, it shall keep its ground boldly; "'tis conscience that makes cowards of us all,"—and so on. But to return to the Grimsel pilgrims; nothing could be imagined better than the effect produced by those solitary figures, or detached groupes, hanging upon a rocky ledge, crossing a fragile bridge, or spread out upon a green Oasis, forming moving pictures, with just life enough about them to fall well into their wild frame-work of sky and mountain.

One party had halted on a soft turf with a few

trees about it, and we recognised an acquaintance whom we had last seen at Brussels. There is something piquant in those accidental jostlings which so frequently occur in Switzerland. You bid adieu to a person going southwards, and you, perhaps, are turning towards the north; it is a chance if you may ever meet again, or at least, when events may re-unite you. You have ceased to look in the traveller's book for a name which you believe already written in another land; pass a mountain, cross a lake, and the familiar face starts out at some unexpected turning; and if it happens to belong to one of whom you have thought with feelings of kindliness and regret, the effect of its sudden apparition may be certainly classed amongst the pleasurable pungencies of life.

I have often smiled to think of the facility with which acquaintances are formed in travelling. Strangers rambling over a country like Switzerland, stumble on each other so often, and under so many circumstances that defy etiquette, that the ice is soon broken. You cannot go through the phases of formality with a person with whom you have climbed mountains, or dined in a smoky hut; who has lent you his umbrella, or got your shoes dried. These, and a hundred kind offices of a similar nature, are reciprocally performed and received by

every mountain traveller; and in this almost domestic intercourse, one naturally forgets that the person whose courtesy soothes the hour of fatigue, or whose society helps off a dreary inn or a scanty dinner, is one even to whose name you are sometimes a stranger.

The Handeck had dressed itself out in an Iris, and looked gloriously desolate and all the more desolate for the contrasting radiance of the bright arch that hung over it. We stopped to look again upon its broad flood, which seemed to join the heavens and earth together, and thought it finer than when we first saw it; finer, in short, than any thing we had ever seen in its wild way. Partook of some bread and honey in a chalet near the fall, and bought some knives for cutting paper, made of the horn and bone of the chamois. At almost every village in the Oberlands articles of various kinds in wood, prettily and sometimes very tastefully carved, may be purchased. The principal mart is at Brientz, but they are manufactured in many places; the forms are often graceful and even classical; and are copied (at least at Brientz) from drawings carefully selected.

"Is that Meyringhen?" inquired my foot (still suffering from the fall at Spa,) as we left the Hasli Grund behind us, looking in a half sunny

light like an off-shoot of Eden, or one of Danby's best—"have we any more hills to slide down?" I did not acknowledge that I was fatigued. My performance had been so highly applauded, that such an avowal would have been too much for my vanity; and yet when I saw the wild man swinging before the door of the inn, I must confess I thought the sight a benediction.

All the fair Haslians, and all the idle males of this particularly idle place, were congregated at their doors, or spread out at their windows. We had a passing moment of vanity, a fleeting idea that our cavalcade was the object of attraction;—vain thought! It was the Prince of Denmark, who arrived a few minutes after us, with an escort of Danish dogs, a very simple cortège, and an air as unaffected as his equipage.

There are few things in Switzerland more lovely than Interlacken; it has a perfume of peaceful freshness upon it, which even its bustle cannot destroy. Any where else it would be magnificent;—here it is only beautiful, for the eye dwelling on its embosomed sweetness, after having rested long upon the naked grandeur of the high Alpine regions, sees only its soft home features, and loves its fertile meadows and the spreading foliage of its fine trees, as one does a dear fire-side, or any other

happy domestic scene. In the very teeth of its snow mountains, it is always called a sweet resting-place—a pleasant spot—"a place good enough for me," as a gentleman said yesterday, who being sick of stormy peaks and flooded valleys, seemed to look upon it as a home concern, like Richmond Park, or Kensington Gardens. The "Chamois" is gone to learn French (and I hope nothing more than French) at Lausanne; her place is supplied by a sister of the house, a pretty, pale girl, with an air (I thought) of pettish languor; but they tell me it is love—love for an uncombed waiter, with two or three rings on every finger, and one of Canova's ballarinas thrown out from a ground of purple glass in his shirt frill. "O Cupid! prince of gods and men!" it is not alone amidst the Thracian girls, or in the streets of Abdera, that thy omnipotence is acknowledged.

The few days of our absence have been sufficient to clear off all the stragglers, and restore Interlacken to its character of quiet beauty. And how beautiful it is at this moment, with the settings-off of silence and evening sunshine. But the spell is broken. It does not look now as it used to do before the eye was accustomed to see it crowded with strangers: then it was like something fresh, and just discovered; now it is like something

known and deserted. The crowd was unappropriate and vexatious, but the solitude is emptiness (two very distinct things); this is the effect of a contrast which did not before exist. I feel its influence always in Kensington Gardens; it is so lovely in its fresh untrodden loneliness, when the first greening of spring is spreading over every branch and spray, that one wishes to keep it all for one's self and a few dearly beloved. Then comes the gay throng of patrician beauties, the mob of gentlemen, the hum of voices, the rustle of French silks, and the music of the life-guards. Very disagreeable (I always say), and spoils the whole thing. But all on a sudden the ladies vanish—the beaus disappear—the music is hushed, and the talisman, alas! broken. The scene is still delicious: fresh grass springs up; the air becomes softer as the summer heats decline; but utter solitude has succeeded to the buzz of life;—it is gone, like the vision of Mirza, and we can no longer recall the feelings with which the repose of its early spring was enjoyed.

No one has ever asked my opinion about an Oberland tour—very remiss, by the bye. If any one should do so, I shall send them over the hills. The Wenghern Alp and the Scheideck are certainly finer and more original than the gentle valleys

where "huge *cheeses* grow," though these are very good in their way, but their way is a mere every-day one. It is something new to see a world of clouds below one's feet (this is, of course, a chance variety, but a frequent one), and to watch them rolling off, and slowly discovering another world beneath; to dine on the roof of a chalet, in the midst of lonely mountains pastured by herds of cattle, whose bells ring merrily, with goats (much handsomer than those of the plains,) browsing around, and real Alpine shepherds serving fresh milk in wooden bowls, while the Jungfrau, within whispering distance, looks down upon one in amazing whiteness; to fall in love with glaciers at Rosenlaui, and see the Wetterhorn as we once saw it, its pyramidal head seeming to hang in mid air, like the tomb of the prophet, while immediately beneath, impenetrable clouds rested upon it, and entirely divided the aerial summit from the dark and heavy base. Then the descent upon Grindelwald or Meyringhen, so much more striking than the regular entrance, and the scattered life that starts up here and there, and harmonizes so perfectly with the scene. Young girls with bright hair, shouting their *ranz des vaches* from a green hillock before the entrance of a chalet; others stationed higher up the hills catching up

the strain in the same wild way; little boys of six or seven years old flinging themselves in one's path, and imitating the attitudes of the Oberland wrestlers with the grace that always belongs to childhood; herdsmen with the short full-sleeve, the open collar embroidered in blue, and cap with the point turned forwards, like a Phrygian bonnet, always picturesque though sometimes of ungentle aspect, but when handsome, quite the shepherd of Mount Ida. Besides, in the mountains the frequent avalanche is heard, loud and deep, like the awful artillery of heaven, booming gloomily through the desert, and one makes acquaintance with chalets, rude sheds it is true, not like the charming chalets that Rousseau knew or dreamt of; puddle to the threshold, a little straw to lie upon, and for furniture, the milking stools and dairy utensils—the very nakedness of pastoral simplicity, but they hold well with the rest, and are a good moral lesson on superfluities.

One charm is wanting in the high mountains, the presence of woman; I never saw one in a *real* chalet. I remember in coming over the Scheideck we stopped to take some milk in a farm-house, dropped down on a buttercup lawn in the heart of the mountains; a family were living in it, and it was pleasant to be served by females and to see

them performing the social offices after a day passed amongst herdsmen; they were smoke-dried specimens, but their presence diffused an air of stationary domestic comfort, which all places want in the absence of the gentler sex.

When I get up into the mountains, I never know how to come down again; but here we are dancing up and down on the blue waters of Thoun, and here we have been for nearly an hour, waiting for a carriage to convey us to Berne.

"Enough of water hast thou, poor Ophelia," and so had we, more than enough; but there was such a hurrying into the Oberlands and out of the Oberlands, that we had no resource but patience—a species of passive courage of the old cloak kind, more useful than showy.

The very obliging and gentlemanlike person who accompanied us from Neuhaus, kindly offered us the carriage which waited for him, but we were too numerous to profit by his benevolent intentions. At length we have procured a "leathern convenience," a landau, the driver calls it, "but how unlike Mark Antony!" and are draggling on to Berne through mist and mire.

Sept. 7th.—Six, seven, eight o'clock, and no sound of carriage-wheels, no trampling of horses. Can we possibly be at the Hôtel du Faucon, and

in the Rue des Juifs? I asked myself this question on awaking, but could not solve the difficulty; I now find that this is the day appointed for the observance of the annual fast, and that no carriages can enter or quit the town from six in the morning till five in the afternoon. Shops all closed, and not even a warm bath accessible; the women gliding about in sackcloth, if not in ashes, black from the crown to the heel, with devout and downcast looks and a mortified air, which may be either humility or ostentation, *c'est selon*. A stranger passing through the gloomy and stirless streets, might suppose himself in a city desolated by the plague, and through which nothing living dared to move, save a few courageous sisters of charity, still spared to pursue their heroic vocation.

The same mournful silence reigns within the house. No bell rings, no doors bang; neither the swell of Neiderhausen's solemn base, nor the squeaking treble of the major-domo, are any longer heard; I begin to fear that it may not be the thing to dine,—what an affair that would be! what a theme for verses, even more lamentable than Beaudouin's complaint to his uncle the Marquis of Mantua!

But no such melancholy fate awaited us; dinner was served with all customary stateliness and attacked with remarkable vigour, as if the very

sound of the word *fast* had created appetite. I was much amused by a warlike-looking old lady, who called to the waiter to bring her a *salmis de perdreaux*, then making its rounds; adding, in a tone of violent irritation, that she had asked for it three times, and it had been handed to another, and casting, while she spoke, a flashing glance at the plate of the successful candidate, who instantly retorted with a look of fire that would have said,

> "'Tis with reason,—'tis in season,—
> 'Tis as you yourself have done,
> Thou fang, thou claw, thou gulph, thou maw!
> Yielding partage fair to none."

All that guide-books point out and tourists talk of, we had seen at Berne, and we really enjoyed having nothing to look at this morning. And yet to-night we have been to doze over Koenig's inevitable transparencies; very poor work for a second visit, and this is my third. But they will not do in the way of mountains, after having seen the reality, nor in the way of women either. The Oberland divinities are but homely nymphs after all, with here and there (as at Interlacken and Meyringhen) a few showy exceptions. And the fair Elizabeth, who, ever bright and young, still sits at her eternal oar, to the admiration of

Koenig's nightly visitors, is no longer "a young Aurora of the air," but a staid matron, who squabbles with her husband, and chronicles small beer at the inn, or ale-house, of Unterseen.

Strolled into the market this morning;—a little monotonous from the sameness of the dress, and dull from the prevalence of black; yet still bustling and original. The only variety that broke in upon the uniformity of winged caps and black boddices, was the hideous costume of Gouggisberg; creatures of the softer sex, with visible knees!—and bare ones too; what an outrage on the gentle graces of womanhood! Amazingly rugged and sinewy the women, even the youngest. The Swiss female soon loses the swelling contours of youth, and does not often gain the fulness of form, which, when not carried to excess, prolongs a portion of its charms. But the old ones are perfect; their black caps with deep flapping veil-like borders, gray hair hanging down the back in two long tresses, firm step, bronzed complexions, and the bold and scrutinizing expression of their time-touched features, recall to mind the inspired women of Walter Scott. They are the Ulla Troils, Magdalen Græmes, and Elspeths of his rich imagination, embodied in all their brawny awfulness. The costly finery exposed for sale here is quite

remarkable, when the purchasers (all country girls) are considered; quite a fancy ball display of beads and foil, and silver fillagree.

I made a patriotic purchase of a paper of Bartlett's cut steel sharps, and Gertrude bought a sulphur glazed hat, the favourite head-dress of the young girls, and in which they look exactly like the shepherdesses in the old Sevre porcelain; give them but a lamb, and a kneeling shepherd in a vest of pink and silver, and opera slippers, and a model is instantly formed for a chandelier, worthy of Marli or Versailles in their days of brocade and velvet.

The Swiss love to decorate their persons and their churchyards; the first are in better taste than the last, though grotesque enough too sometimes. But the village cemetery is like a grove of gilt filligree, or the atelier of a wretched portrait painter; every grave has its medallion, encircled by wreaths of leaves, or scrolls, or—heaven knows what,—in gilt iron, with the deplorable visage of a nun, or an officer, or a lady, or some other libel on the human face within it. This remark, however, applies only to the forest cantons; the cemeteries of Berne are grassy and peaceful, in the midst of soft and charming scenery, and with no other decoration than that of flowers, except the slight black and white pole which one wishes away,

it looks so like the ticketed laths of a botanical garden. Different countries have different ideas on the subject of monumental records, and what are flowers, and gilt iron, and even silver tears, compared with the vein of tenderness which ran through that widow's heart, who inscribed the following touching effusion on the tomb of her deceased love :—

CI GÎT LOUIS LENOIR,
FABRICANT DE BAS,
SA VEUVE INCONSOLABLE
CONTINUE SON COMMERCE
RUE ST. MARTIN, N°. 18.

a village churchyard in Champagne possesses this precious drop of the heart's dew.

As I roamed about the market, I found myself admiring the force of habit which can make people not only eat, but relish the old Swiss cheese; its very odour is stifling, there is no approaching the street in which it is spread out for sale. Good Gruyère has its advocates, but the twenty years' old delicacies require a palate absolutely national.

The offensive feature of Berne presents itself at this moment before me; the file of malefactors, employed in sweeping the streets, has just halted under our windows. This idle work seems ill devised as a punishment. A public exposure, con-

tinued until it becomes habitual, must entirely deaden the sense of shame, and blunt the edge of sensibility which often lingers after virtue, and produces its return. It has neither the deterring feature of solitary confinement, more dreadful to a vicious mind than pain itself, nor the character of severity which might appal the timid villain. It is a mere show of discipline, shared in the open air with a crew of gossips; and then, supposing that a repentant criminal should, at the expiration of his or her appointed time of punishment, feel a desire to return to the path of honest industry, who would receive in their employ or trust a worse than branded felon? one whose face has become so familiar to the common gaze in its cap of infamy, as to be indelibly associated with the images of degradation and crime? The female malefactors at Berne look as if contrition was not a word in their vocabularies; those who are now before my eyes are young girls, who have smartened their prison liveries into as much spruceness as striped flannel and a skull-cap will admit of, and have nothing in their impudent faces that can either warn or edify.*

* This inefficient punishment has, I believe, been recently abolished.

CHAPTER XII.

THE EMMENTHAL—SUMMISVALD—LUCERNE—ZOUG—WADENSCHWYLL—LAKE OF ZURICH—ENSEIDLEN.

HUTWYLL.—Glorious snatches of the snow mountains to-day! sometimes the whole chain visible; peaks and cupolas glittering in the sunbeams, and giant forms of an architecture that mocks all rule, lifting their everlasting heads even to the gates of heaven.

The road from Berne here passes through the fair and fertile Emmenthal. We looked up at the castle of Worb, from whose terrace we had once seen the sun set behind the silver Oberlands, a thing never to be forgotten, and thought of the courteous ladies who did the honours of their native Alps so graciously; but still more of the changeful aspect of the snow mountains, as the setting sun blazed and then faded on them; their first bright glitter, then the strangely beautiful rose-colour, and last of all, the cold and ghastly white.

This green Emmenthal is one of the richest and most fertile of the Swiss valleys. It is not a mere affair of corn, wine, and oil, but a country that would make a grazier's heart sing for joy. Such a prodigality of horned cattle; and what a passer-by can better appreciate, pleasant villages, such as love might dwell in, but that of late the "anointed sovereign" has shown a decided preference for drawing-rooms. The farm-houses have more even than the usual amplitude of roof, and appear to contain within their wooden boundaries and the supplementary space over which the immense thatch spreads itself, every kind of country comfort, and all the rustic and appropriate litter of the Bernese cottage, milk-pails freshly scoured and ranged in the sun, wood piled up, or herbs spread out to dry; here, an array of bee-hives; there, an accumulation of rakes, barrows, and all the implements of husbandry; and every where an autumnal profusion of marguerites and holly-hocks, giving to the little gardens a gay bloom, which, if not actually the bloom of summer, looks very like it.

Dined at a nice little inn at Summisvald, where we found a piano, and a voluminous collection of Swiss airs and German waltzes. Opened a music-book, and found the first page scrawled over with tender recollections:—"*On such a day my dear*

Sophia left us."—" *Monsieur Valdimir m'a taillé cette plume,*" *&c.* Unfortunately, the maidens who had penned these gentle nota-benes were two very clumsy country girls, daughters of the house;* but they sang for us with great sweetness and expression, accompanying their national melodies on the piano with sufficient skill.

These delightful *ranz des vaches!* how they fasten on the heart, and fill the mind with images of loneliness and pastoral life; with mountain associations, bright but melancholy, like sunbeams on a lurid sky, and (I think) deeply affecting. It is not the music to please in an opera-house, but it is the melody to break an exile's heart; at a town concert it might be thought poor stuff; but here, by the fall of fountains and in the midst of echoing rocks, its savage but plaintive cry knocks against the heart, and disposes the mind to believe all that is said of its magic influence on the wanderer in distant lands. It gives back the romantic home—the dream of early love and uncrossed hope,—the horn, and the chamois—the chalet clinging to the gray rock and the hill of the hunter; like the

* This is the phrase in Switzerland. In an inn no one speaks of the innkeeper's son, or daughter; but of the son of the house, the daughter of the house.

mirage of the desert, it cheats the heart for a moment only to deepen its sadness,—it sounds like hope, and it is only memory. Now that I have seen the mountains and heard the music of Switzerland, I can understand the *maladie du pays*, that twisting up of home and country with the very fibres of the heart.

A young woman of Neufchâtel, who had lived three years in Poland as governess in a family of distinction, told me that, though treated with the most considerate kindness, she could not support her exile; her heart (she said) was dying, she had no malady, only a longing for home; visions of distant fields, such as swam before the dying eyes of the wretches who clung to the raft of the Medusa, haunted her diseased imagination. At length an opportunity occurred of returning to Switzerland; she arrived just alive, but so changed that her parents scarcely recognised her. Two young persons, who had gone to Poland at the same time with this poor girl, languished and died, not having the means of quitting the land of their exile.

A-propos to music,—this village of Summisvald has a manufactory of instruments, which, if we can trust to the information of a half-alive waiter (another child of the house,) are sent all over Italy and Germany. I have my doubts; but with-

out supposing the reputation of their clarionets and violins to be absolutely European, it is singular to find this auxiliary branch of the arts carried on and flourishing in a village so obscure.

Messieurs les Bourguemestres of Berne limit the dancing days of the Summisvaldians to six in the year. Next Sunday there will be a ball for the Valdimirs and the Sophies, I suppose, for there does not seem to be any thing here of a higher calibre. This embargo laid on the feet (the heavy feet) of the fair Bernoises and their athletic Celadons, seems to be taken rather mutinously. Indeed their Excellencies of Berne appear to have robbed their bear of some of his "particular additions." The constant contemplation of his effigy, which decorates every post and pillar in their capital, may perhaps account in some degree for their inflexible gruffness.

The French understand these matters better, and are politic, at least, if not just. Wherever they introduced or forced themselves, they left with the people the trifles which sweeten life; the malleable gold leaf, that spreads its beautiful glitter over the naked surface; it is true they sometimes took away the ore, which, not being shaped into coin of common currency, was less liable to be speedily missed. I recollect once

hearing a group of Savoyards bitterly regretting the return of the old regime, and entirely, as it seemed, on account of the prohibition against dancing and Sunday diversions. We spoke of taxes and conscription; they acknowledged to have suffered much from both; but then they danced whenever they liked it, and had such "fêtes!"

After Hutwyll, where we slept passably (that is, had passable beds), and breakfasted on the overflowings of the land—cream, honey, butter, upon whose merits Louis Dixhuit would have written at least a chapter, the country, though very agreeable, becomes less lovely. We lose, by degrees, the Bernoise cottage and Bernoise dress. The last loss is a gain (pass for the bull), for the dress of the Lucernoise is richer and more becoming. The large and perfectly flat hat, sulphur-coloured and decorated with four voluminous bows, two of red and two of green, is extremely pretty, and throws a soft shade on the upper part of the face, very advantageous to its expression. Then the gorgeously embroidered vest—the petticoat, shorter than short, half of a dark colour, and half of a light one—the large white sleeve,—neck loaded with beads, crosses, and amulets (like a shrine that had run away with its ex-votos) and above all, the immaculate stocking, either of white

or light blue, well drawn up, and finished by a smart shoe with a bow of no small pretension, are all perfect. In this gaudy but becoming dress, the young women contrive to look pretty without being so; but the same fantastic attire makes Hecates of the old ones. Again I must say, the Swiss, as a people, are certainly not handsome. A gay dress and a smart air set off the young girls; but even the Sunday Pamelas of the esplanade of Berne, or the Boadiceas of the Hasli Grund, are not beauties. Of the pretty things that bloom behind green window blinds, or illumine turretted chateaus, I know nothing. Switzerland has long furnished heroines for sentimental novels, and may still have the material within her; but the people, good honest souls, are certainly a hard-featured race.

We had a fair opportunity to-day of judging both of the dress and the beauty, as we passed slowly through a hamlet in which a sort of religious festival was going forward. The women were all crowded together, like a bed of Dutch tulips; some huddled under trees, others grouped in the porch of a chapel, gossiping, gazing, praying, all looking showy and picturesque, and none looking pretty.

Found Lucerne ankle deep, and dull as ever;

I have always thought it the least pleasing of the Swiss capitals, all (after German Switzerland is entered) eminently gloomy. But I may be wrong, we take fancies to localities, as we do to faces; we cannot always tell why, but never want reasons with which to bolster up our caprices. But Lucerne may well be forgiven its want of interest, in favour of all the indemnifying things in its neighbourhood. What a getting up of mountains!—and such a lake! We passed twelve hours on it yesterday, stood again within the chapel of the mountain Brutus, paid homage to the southern gulf and its glorious accompaniments, perhaps unparalleled in lake scenery, glided by the rock of Wytenstein, standing out detached from the great chain like a lonely watch tower, remarked the curious structure of the rocks which have the exact appearance of masonry, and looked once more at the green and placid Grütli, the memorable scene of those silent midnight meetings to which Switzerland eventually owed her freedom. Those were honest conspirators, whose names live in the field of Grütli—honest in aim and deed; their tyrants were foreign villains—base and barbarous. They would be free, and willing it sincerely, became so. But no bloodshed—no reprisals—no thought of self aggrandizement.

This is fine and rare. In the great days of ancient Rome, altars would have been erected to such men; but Stauffacher, Furst, and Melcthal, are now scarcely remembered beyond the limits of the historical cantons. Their effigies, indeed, are still circulated in some deplorable prints that kill all high-minded associations. Three buckram wretches, each with a stiff finger half an ell long, pointing to a huge unnatural moon. What abominations are committed in honour of liberty both by the pen and the pencil!

There was no possibility of passing Brunnen without wishing to look again from the knoll overhanging the village, or from the still finer point, the grassy terrace to the left; so we landed and did both. What an amazing combination! The wide dark spread of water,—the lonely and romantic shores,—the stately company of mountains, whose colossal portals seem to close up the entrance of some unknown and mysterious world, belong to the highest order of scenery: both points command these grand objects in all their splendour. Yet we were not quite sure that the view from the lake itself, at a little distance from Brunnen, going towards Lucerne and keeping the shore on the right hand, is not the best of all, but I will not vouch for it.

It were endless to dwell on the scenery of the Lucerne lake. Its superb gulfs, its bays of gentler beauty, magnificent outlines, and soft details, cannot be brought by words to the mind's eye. The best descriptive painter raises but a vague and unidentified idea, even when he delineates objects similar in their general character to those with which we are habitually familiar. What then can words do for a scene that looks like a fragment of a world, made for something more exalted than man? For notwithstanding all which the most philosophic of princes has said, touching the "paragon of animals," he looks but punily here, contrasted with the colossal bearing of inanimate nature.

Poor little Gersau! it can no longer boast its unsapped republic; but it has woods and mountains which the higher powers of the canton of Schwytz cannot take from it,—and quiet homes (the word *home* ought to be Swiss, as well as English), and sunny creeks, with boats drawn up into them, and trees, and chalets, falling just in the right places and making sweet miniatures, each in its own appropriate setting.

But above all, the sunset! *—our young party

* On looking over this page, I find that I have given the sunset to Gersau as private property.

will, I think, never forget it. The gloom of the mountain back-ground, on which the purple twilight was already gathering,—the radiance of the nearer scene,—rocks catching the red light, which as it fell upon their kindling masses seemed to force them out from their clinging drapery of pines, —the lake glittering like liquid fire, and the sky like a temple in which angels might hold their jubilees. As darkness came on, the promontories seemed to detach themselves from the main land, and to advance into the lake, where they stood darkly and firmly, taking the form of islands as the back screen gradually receded from them, and was lost in the shroud of night.

But again I feel how meagre is the gorgeousness of words, when we would embody the bright casualties of nature in her moments of glory! Poor cobweb,—at least in common hands,—yet I have it in my heart, and in my fancy; but when I try to fix it, it flies off, and will not be whistled back again.

Our homeward navigation was tedious; the lights had faded in the west, and golden streaks had turned to gray before we had even approached the opening of the gulf of Kussnacht. It was not pleasant to look forward to total darkness in the middle of the wild lake of Lucerne; but we were

making up our minds to it, when the moon slowly unhooded and looked down benignly upon us as she sailed on to visit her shepherd love, who was probably asleep on one of the high hills. We hailed her light, which brought us safely to Lucerne at ten o'clock, after a day of great enjoyment.

Poor Weber!—not the composer, but the possessor, when we were last here, of the beautiful Allenwinden. We were talking at supper of his exquisite garden, and the wonderful world it overlooks, and of the simple kindness with which he extolled our children and filled their laps with delicious flowers, while we, ashamed of the faint praise with which on the evening before we had hailed his lake and his mountains, cried O! to his entire satisfaction. It was a raw and blackish sky, I remember, when we first saw it, with a few red lurid streaks, stretching out wide and far into the heavens; I thought the scenery stern and sorrowful, and did not praise it,—the next evening it was divine,—poor simple soul, he is gathered to his fathers, and before his time too,—not honestly sent (as they say here) to his account; but one does not like to think of crime in the midst of the great primitive features of nature, that talk about the golden age and awaken lofty aspirations.

But after all, there is in the wonderful scenery

of this neighbourhood a melancholy that mingles with its gayest features. The lake, even in its finest part, has a menacing air; its calm seems to presage future turbulence. Here, is the fierce and gloomy Pilate,—there, the melancholy gulf of Alpnach. A little farther back, Stantz of tragical story; and behind the opposite shore, the soft vale and gentle lake of Lowertz, with its unnatural and monumental ruins, the awful memorials of the fall of the Rossberg, which, overwhelming the village of Goldau and four adjacent hamlets, swept off at once from the face of the earth a whole population, said to have been remarkable for moral conduct and personal beauty, and a moment before in the full security of existence. At five o'clock a strange unearthly sound was heard, and in three minutes all was over !—not a trace remained of the fair and smiling country, scarcely a trace of its peaceful inhabitants. Nothing but dust and ashes marked the spot which a moment before had teemed with life—hearts full of hope, of gladness, of innocent love, were beating there; then came the crash, and then the deadly silence—never to be broken! These are mournful images, which pursue one in the midst of flowery meads and bubbling fountains. Lucerne itself sits pleasantly at the head of its gulf, with its odd bridges, and towers and ram-

parts about it, the stormy Pilate looking down on one side, and the softer Righi guarding it on the other. The river is lively, and the long bridges, original and characteristic; that of the cathedral (the Hofbrücke) looks on a scene of ineffable beauty, and is all painted inside with subjects taken from holy writ. The heroic Swiss of former ages still fight and conquer on the Pont de la Chapelle; and the Pont des Moulins exhibits a dance of death, I think by Molinger. In the confederated cantons patriotism and piety march together, the oath and the apple share the wall with the Virgin and the patron saint; but Lucerne is purely Catholic, and as obviously so as any manufactory of relics at the other side of the Alps; at every corner Madonnas and Bambinos, crowned with flowers, bear witness to the pious intentions of their decorators. This is bearable, even pretty; flowers become childhood, and innocent beauty. But a fresh-gathered chaplet of red and white roses, contrasting the agonies of a dying Saviour, has something shocking in it. Yet it is all done reverentially; and the offensive, which immediately strikes the eye of a stranger, never crosses the mind of a devout Swiss Catholic.

Talked with an intelligent man who lamented the dulness of trade here, but said it would be vain

to think of creating a spirit of industry in a Catholic canton. Holidays returned so often, that no uninterrupted time remained for work. After the church ceremonies, came the gay carousal, and the next day, languor and poverty. He spoke of an English family, who had remained some time at Lucerne, apparently for the purpose of disseminating certain tracts: amongst its members was a spiritual director—a living skeleton, gaunt and melancholy,—and three very young ladies of eminent beauty, who passed their days in tears and solitude, always on their knees with the shutters closed, weeping and praying. This is a gloomy view of religion, which in its true spirit is so full of consolation to the sincere of heart. Such feelings are too nearly allied to the howling terrors of gone-by fanaticism; minds so utterly subdued, soon yield themselves up to the dominion of more powerful spirits, or sink into insane despair. It was by the strong engine of terror that monks obtained their domination, and the inquisition its power. We know that we must expect justice, but we are permitted to hope for mercy. He whom we worship is the *All Wise*. It is not to the black arm that rears itself up from the depths of the Atlantic, nor yet before the altar of Moloch that we humbly bend the knee.

Met some of our Grimsel pilgrims this morning at breakfast. They had gone up the Righi from Weggis, and descended to Art; we did just the reverse, and I think were right; the first is a gradual developement of beauty, the last (as we took it,) a sudden burst of splendour, consequently the most decided and impressive. They had fared (by their account) very miserably, had been chilled, starved, soaked through with rain, and had only ten minutes blue sky. We too had fog and starvation when we passed three days at the Coulm—

> "Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
> Which men call earth,"

but a soft warm air, and no rain. Vacillated yesterday, half inclined to try it again,—but the clouds that hung upon it, and still muffle its summit, deterred us.

As we quitted Lucerne (which has nothing alive in it but its river), we caught a glance of Thorwaldsen's lion,* dying in his niche. It is a fine image of strength laid prostrate, of mastered agony, and far more touching in its singleness than a legion of blubbering cherubs, veiled nuns, and trumpeting fames. But the getting up of the chapel is in

* A monument raised to the memory of the Swiss who were massacred at Paris on the 10th of August.

vile taste, black banners, and white lilies, and all sorts of trumpery profanations.

There is no going wrong in this magnificent Switzerland; it is always the Aar, or the Reuss, or the Alps, or something else of amazing power and beauty; and yet a country-house, such as one would grow fond of and love to live in, a home paradise of shade and flowers, is scarcely to be met with. I often think as I move along, and see the evidences of a taste, that (while the sweet light of nature breaks in at every point) still cleaves to the shears and the compass, of the dear liveable things that *we* create out of (sometimes) very scanty materials. Our cottage of one story, the windows opening on a freshly mown lawn, with its clear brook or its spreading tree, and its veranda or trelised porch, curtained with clematis, jessamine, roses, or some other beautiful or sweet-smelling plant, giving shade and fragrance to the cheerful family-looking apartment within, full of comfortable sofas, musical instruments, books, drawings, vases of fresh-gathered flowers, all bearing marks of being used and enjoyed, is wanting here. The humbler dwellings, dropped down any where, are perfect; mount a step higher, and box, yew, and gold leaf carry all before them.

A pleasing and sometimes very English country

to the lake of Zoug, which opens here rather disadvantageously. I recollect its mild beauty when we were once rowed along its shores from Zoug to Immensee, in the early morning, and how much we were pleased with the bay of Art, and with many other things not visible as we now have it.

The distinctive faculty of human nature is certainly laughter; the monkey walks erect, the parrot talks, the stag sheds tears, the dog almost reasons, but man alone laughs, and never was this attribute exercised to so boisterous an extent as by the late hostess of the Cerf, at Zoug. I shall never forget her dreadful shout, or its electrifying effect. Poor old soul!—she is now silent, we found her place supplied by her daughter, whose beautiful eyes cannot redeem the rest of her face. The son is what the French would call "un jeune homme rempli de talens;" speaks several languages, (English very well), brings out soft music from three or four jews' harps, and touches the guitar like a Spanish cavalier serenading an Andalusian gazelle in her citron bower. We were much amused by his talents, which probably do not contribute to his happiness. The desire of attainment is usually accompanied by a certain refinement of mind, which cannot perhaps easily conform itself to the diurnal drudgery of a country inn. His

sister, a simple practical philosopher, expatiated on the pleasure of mending house linen, and making shirts during the long evenings of winter, not long enough, however, (she thought) for the full enjoyment of this delightful occupation. What fine materials for a second Penelope! no web could be too tedious, or intricate: when she talked of the dozens and dozens of napkins, the presses full of table-cloths wanting repair, her eye widened. I never saw the love of plain-work so deeply imbedded in the heart of woman, nor was ever more strongly impressed with the artificial nature of what we call happiness. Had this poor girl been a Paris grisette, she would have shrunk from a winter at Zoug as from the horrors of a lingering death; even the recreation of the house linen would have gone for nothing; no "spectacle," no "toilette," no "joli bal," nothing *going forward.* But we are all the creatures of circumstances, and perhaps happiness, as it is generally understood, depends in a great measure on being at a distance from those who are enabled to invent and pursue privileged and exclusive enjoyments. Contrasts, and perhaps reminiscences, make large items in the general sum of discontent.

Poorish fare, served with a thousand apologies and as many regrets that there was not time to

make it better,—and then, a sort of delicate compensation in the shape of a fish of most agreeable flavour, called in France "barra," or something very like it, and here "rœtelle." Whatever may be its right name, it deserves to be immortal as the Ferra, which sentimentalists swallow with tears in their eyes at Lausanne and Vevay. Thanks to our stars, we had seen the lions of Zoug—manes, tails, and all; the convent, (I shall never forget the desperate agility of the pensionnaires who danced for our edification, and the merry nun who sung with them, not canticles but tender German airs), the silver saints, the Carracci, and all the et cæteras; and so have earned that blessed repose from the labour of sight-seeing, which travellers enjoy more than they will always venture to acknowledge. I had a little wish to have looked again at General Zerlauben's quaint saloon, painted all over like a pack of cards, with French kings and Swiss warriors, Tell with his apple, Nicolas de Flue with his rosary, a lavish display of Austrian cruelties, and a general diffusion of angels and flowers; but from the windows something still better than even those fine things,—a lake and landscape full of richness and amenity. It was the fair sempstress of Zoug, I recollect, who conducted us there, and I affronted her deeply by

crying out "superbe" to the view, when she expected it for the saloon. Her triumphant "je le crois bien," turned into a look of disappointment as she found herself mistaken in the object of my admiration. It was a cockney kind of vanity, such as possesses a Paris *badaud* when he puts on an air of self-consequence, and talks of Versailles and the Tuileries as if they were his own private possessions.

What are the men about in this fair country—or are there any in it? I have my doubts. The fields are alive with women, all wrapped up in large crimson kerchiefs pulled over their eyes; but not a male to aid their labours, except now and then a boy to guide the plough, or an old man up in a tree shaking down apples, which the women collect in sacks as provender for the pigs:*—ladders as long as Jacob's fixed against the trees; they are not, however, angels who ascend and descend, but very material personages with uncomely overworked faces, from which incessant labour has rubbed out all traces of feminality,—an affected word, but I don't know where to look for a better.

* As I was told, but I find that bad cider and worse brandy are made from them, and the pigs only come in for the windfalls.

A repose of pilgrims with their wallets thrown on the grass near them, and a devout soul on her knees a little apart from the group, her clasped hands uplifted, and head inclining backwards in an attitude of devout abstraction, would have made a charming cabinet gem, with the help of a little Italian colouring; but the sky was a black blue, and chilled the picture.

Came down upon the lake of Zurich by moonlight,—fine for the developement of architectural forms, and lovely when it throws its long quivering line of silver light across the broad expanse of water; but not so favourable to placid garden scenery as the warm beams of a setting sun. Slept at the very clean inn at Wadenschwyll, where we had dined three or four years ago, before our first visit to Italy. The little girl, who had sung to us so sweetly, is at Frybourg, cultivating filligree and chenille flowers at a boarding-school. The old host and incomparable frier of fish, gathered to his fathers; and the widow, who seems to have struck off fifteen years from her age, appears too deeply sensible of the difficulties to which a lone woman is exposed, to remain long in so delicate a position. It was true (she said) that her husband was twenty years older than herself, and moreover "très souffrant;" but still—and then came a sigh,

and a screw-up of the eyes, but it would not do—Landseer's *Widow*, though but a duck, was an Andromache, compared to her.

This same old man was a striking example of the slight soil from which a stock of happy feelings may be raised. He waited upon us, I remember, at dinner, and expatiated on the beauty of his village and his own comforts. He had every thing that man could wish for, and as a crown-all, a garden, with trees shaped like pyramids; and as he spoke of them, he rubbed his hands in ecstasy. Then came the daughter, a charming dilettante of eleven years old, who sang for us deliciously; but the father's admiration seemed divided between her delightful talent and the light golden brown colour of some fish of his own frying: his daughter was a marvel, but then the fish!—never was fish so fried! I had just cast up the items of happiness enumerated by the good Zuricois,—village, garden, pyramids, daughter, fish, &c., and found the amount quite enviable; when an alarum sounded, and madame entered in full dress to carry off the little nightingale on a pleasure excursion to Uffenau. Dimity redingotte, green capote, prunel slippers, steel chain, and a face that set the salique law at defiance. My trillions and billions dwindled prodigiously, and a word, or rather

scream of advice to her old man, to attend to all matters (including ourselves) in her absence, struck off half the remaining ciphers.

To be carried along in an open carriage on a balmy morning through a rich, gay, populous, and highly cultivated country,—a country of vineyards, orchards, gardens, gentle bays, and pleasant villages, with shade and bubbling streams, and the lake always in view, or near,—is very positive enjoyment, at least to me. Yet this is not first-rate scenery. No grandeur—little picture, but fresh and flowery, and like all the country about Zurich, pleasant and smiling rather than high and mighty. This is classic ground. The charming village of Richterschwyl was the favourite haunt of a distinguished triumvirate; its sweet vicinity has been sung by Klopstock, described by Zimmerman, and loved by that virtuous visionary, the good Lavater. The curious bridge of Rapperschwyl throws its eighteen hundred paces across the lake very strikingly, and makes saleable food for the Boulevard print-stalls, where it sometimes forms a pendant to the Teufelsbrück, or the source of the Aveyron.

The women of Lacken and the corner of Schwytz which pushes itself in here, are frightful, and so dirty! A plain woman may be very charming, but a dirty woman is a monster. The old

ones with their gray—I cannot say tresses—but tangles, twisted into plats, opened perhaps once a year, bare-headed, and encrusted with most unreverend rust, are melancholy objects. But even these poor creatures are "delicate monsters," compared with the nasty girls who leaped out upon us from the last habitations in the valley of Lauterbrunnen, making a kind of rough and ghastly noise which they called singing, just as bears "growling their horrid loves" might be supposed to talk (had they tongues) of their tender feelings.

A high festival to-morrow at the great purifying pool at Enseidlen. So many pilgrims congregated at Zurich from the Black Forest, from Lorraine, even from the neighbourhood of Paris, they say, (but this must be fancy) that boats enough cannot be procured to convey them all up the lake. We met many of both sexes trudging heavily along, some from the Grisons, and others (as we were told) from the Italian side of the Alps. They were not the jolly pilgrims of old Italian story, but grim sinners, with long unsettled scores itemed in every furrow of their rueful visages, evidently penitents on their own accounts; for sometimes they are proxies for richer devotees, who having in a moment of danger or enthusiasm made vows which

they cannot afterwards *conveniently* fulfil, pay the venal piety of their substitutes at the rate of thirty sous a-day.

Enseidlen is the next best thing to St. Peter's at Rome, both as to its absolving powers and its architectural magnificence. So they say here, and would swear too, if necessary. A village entirely dedicated to the sale of relics, and a vast and gorgeous church thronged with pilgrims, of various countries, dresses, and complexions, must be a curious and amusing thing to see. But the contact of a crowd of pilgrims is a foul and dangerous one, and awful for the olfactory nerves. These holy women, and still more these holy men, stick to the belief that dirt is acceptable to the Deity, and push their devotion in this point to an excess, that makes a clean summer suit of mere sackcloth and ashes. The punishment of wearing dirty linen formed Anne of Austria's idea of purgatory; her courtly fancy could imagine no more material infliction. According to this dainty creed, the pilgrims of Enseidlen are in a perpetual limbo, wearing the slough of their sins upon their bodies, while the work of white-washing goes on within.

CHAPTER XIII.

VALLEY OF GLARIS — GLARIS — WESEN — LAKE OF WALLENSTADT — RAGATZ — PFYFFER'S BATHS — COIRE — REICHENAU — JUNCTION OF THE UPPER AND LOWER RHINE — RETZINS — TUSSIS.

It is nature's carnival to-day; birds, leaves, dew-drops, all, as if a soft breath had passed over them, are stirred into life and joy; yet in the midst of this general gala, the valley of Glaris perseveres in its gloom. I have never seen it before, and feel strongly impressed by its character of austerity. It seems to run away from the world. A deep gorge, darkened by stupendous mountains, and watered by copious streams, a melancholy though cultivated nature, and a people cleanly and occupied, who seem (most unaccountably) to add nothing to its cheerfulness.

Made a circuit to see the village of Mollis, beautifully dropped down at the foot of a mountain, with handsome houses, baths, and other indications of civilized life. As a summer thing it is exceed-

ingly pretty. The spot on which the town of Glaris stands, walled-in by beetling mountains, brings out the word gloom again, and so would the town itself, but for a fulness of life (perhaps accidental), which in some degree counteracts the effect of its black neighbourhood. In winter it must be as dark and dripping as a salt-mine; and yet I know an expert confectioner at Florence, a cunning compounder of sweets, who told me that he toiled on, suffering rather than enjoying life, in that gay and splendid city, that he might be enabled to return to these melancholy mountains and end his days at Glaris,—

"Aux cœurs bien nés, que la patrie est chère!"

says, or sings a Frenchman, when the grape comes in aid of his patriotism. But a Frenchman rarely quits his country for any length of time, at least voluntarily; while the first project of a Swiss is to seek in other lands the means of closing life comfortably in his own.

Larger bedchambers, and the inn at Glaris would be perfect as to comfort. I have been just now lamenting to a man here, that the melancholy gallows should be so glaringly in view just outside the town; he agreed with me that it was not a particularly cheerful object, but added, that it was no longer used; I hoped from an improvement in

morals, or an amelioration of the criminal laws,—sanguinary to an extreme in Switzerland. No such thing: they do not, it is true, hang at Glaris, but they behead. Public whipping is still inflicted, and the *question* is in democratic Glaris, as in democratic Zurich, still in force. Champfort said, that France under the old regime, was "une monarchie absolue, tempérée par des chansons," but here the government seems to be "une démocratie pure, tempérée par la potence."

Messieurs les conseillers, in whom all power is vested, were parading the streets this evening, decorated with the badges of authority, the sword, cocked hat, and customary suit of solemn black, like their worships the sheriffs of London. It was a public dinner day, and I thought their high mightinesses seemed to walk a little in the Michael Cassio fashion, with a kind of leaning towards the graceful curve, in preference to the straight line. Two little boys playing in the street were evidently of my opinion; one put his finger to his nose, and the other cried "boo," or something equally irreverent,—perhaps we were all mistaken.

"The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids, that weave their threads with bones,"

kept the street in an uproar of singing and laugh-

ing half the night. I wished them at their reels and looms again, and the watchmen with them, who howled the hours in that doleful recitative which startles the unhabituated ear so dismally in every place that calls itself a Swiss town.

I know of nothing in Switzerland more characteristic as a town than Glaris. Its gloomy streets, dark houses, and frescoed walls, where knights are fixed in everlasting combat, and maidens look upon them from their casements with undying interest, are, as well as the mountains that bristle up above and almost in contact with the houses, legitimately Swiss. What a dismal scene it must have presented, when on a winterish October day, Suwarrow entered it with the wreck of his army and his hundreds of wounded sinking under the tortures of hunger! what a melancholy accordance between the gloom of nature and the sufferings of man! At present it seems to have a cheerful population of spinners and weavers, and composers of the much admired green cheese, the famous Schapzigher (of most villanous flavour, I think), a population, remarkable we are told, for decency of conduct,—the little evening gaieties of course go for nothing,—and amongst whom crime is most creditably rare.

The everlasting hay-harvest is still going on

here. The system of Swiss husbandry seems to consist in cutting the grass as long as a blade springs up. Our host talks to us of the Linthal; a valley of torrents higher up. But our days are numbered, and we found, on consideration, that we could not spare even one. And yet it is difficult to turn away from Switzerland, leaving any of its fine things unseen; it is a country that writes itself in everlasting characters on the mind. I found on retracing the scenes which had most pleased me on my first visit, that every hill, every stream, almost every tree, was familiar to me. But the secret of memory, is (I believe) attention; that which is looked upon, as well as that which is read, with interest, is never forgotten.

We returned through the valley of Glaris to Wesen by a bright blue sky, which I guessed had sunshine in it, if it could have shown itself above the high mountain wall. Heard once more the *ranz des vaches* shrieked from behind a hedge: it is here a novelty; Berne is decidedly the singing canton. Wallenstadt the wicked, was dancing and sparkling in the warm sunbeams, and a group of gay ragged children were flinging pebbles into its clear water, and squabbling amicably about the longest throw. At the sound of carriage wheels, the urchins gathered round us, and I was pleased

to see a carnation tint in some of their ugly faces; for when we were last here, the swoln and languid countenances of the inhabitants of Wesen told the story of pestilence, if not of famine. The frequent inundations of the Linth had converted a fine country into a fœtid marsh, exhaling ague and typhus; a canal was then in progress, which, by conveying the obstreperous waters from the lake of Wallenstadt to that of Zurich, would, it was hoped, remedy the evil. I inquired of the only person within my reach as to its success: he reported it as perfect; but his interest lying obviously that way, the wish, perhaps, was father to the word.

Turned in to the auberge at Wesen, expecting to be unconscionably fleeced, as we had been on a former occasion. But now—"honour is the subject of my story." I could not exactly understand how this had been brought about, for I saw the old landlord, knave, and magistrate, still lurking about with a most impenitent visage; but his son explained the matter very frankly. He had been obliged, he said (his guardian angel probably arranged the matter), to make a journey to Lausanne, and having occasion to pass through several towns, asked of course for the traveller's book, and naturally turned first to the part in

which he was most interested. In every page he read his honoured father's name coupled with the most opprobrious epithets, and an admonition to future travellers to avoid the inn at Wesen usually superadded.

It is one thing to hug one's self in successful knavery, and another to be found out. The son came home, and talked the business over with old Iniquity, who, seeing the matter hopeless, turned quietly into the chimney corner, and suffered the great work of reformation to take its course.

But reformation seems the order of the day; the turbulent, treacherous Wallenstadt, against which every one has something to say, is now as demure and transparent as if it never had a furious or a troubled moment. Its airs of purity and mildness are quite delicious; I had no idea till now of its amazing beauty, having only seen it under the disadvantage of a windy glare. Now it is grand and silent,—so silent, that it is difficult to imagine the high pastures of the mighty Ammon covered with chalets, and eight hundred persons (as our boatmen say) passing their lives on its precipitous heights. Great power in the bold irregularity of the general outline, and in the lofty shores, and marvellous rocks that shoot up audaciously, bearding the heavens; their ledges feathered with pines

even to the jagged and pointed summits,—and infinite beauty in that peculiar air of loneliness, that unvisited noiseless air, so refreshing after the watering-place gaiety of the Oberlands; nothing can be better—put forth, as it is to-day, with great helps from sun and shadows, and a serene atmosphere that transforms its usually boisterous character into one of calm magnificence. No one loves or judges nature, in her rich and powerful moments, with feeling more profound and poetical than Mr. S——. He, I think, puts Wallenstadt next in rank to the gulf of Fluelen,* which (taken from the terrace at Brunnen) makes a class apart in lake scenery.

As we row along close to shore, it is amusing to see the goats poised on apparently inaccessible rocks, looking down with a familiar but scrutinizing air, as if they were recognising old acquaintances. Two young ones have just now got in behind an opening in the rocks and are looking out from it, like beauties in an opera box. Several boats of a light and graceful construction, freighted with Italian merchandise, and one with a supercargo of Franciscan friars, are sailing gently down to Wesen. A lumbering market-boat, full of pas-

* Lake of Lucerne.

sengers, contrasts its heavy and almost imperceptible movement with their gliding progress. Close to shore the lake becomes suddenly deep, and every pebble in the natural mosaic of its pavement may be distinctly counted. The landscape is reflected as in a clear mirror, with a depth and purity of colouring really beautiful; it looks like a lovely world beneath the waters, fairer and fresher than the world above.

Take away the little sprinkling of human life, and this is a scene which might convert an erring but imaginative mind to feelings of pure and elevated piety,—a sublime and solitary scene, but without that austere and melancholy character which awakens dread, and fills the mind with horrible anticipations.

Two low promontories, one with a church, and the other with a ruin upon it, mark the entrance of the gorge of Wallenstadt. The village, or town, as I believe it calls itself, is all swamp and nastiness. A poor negro girl sat at the door of the dirty tenement before which we stopped for something,—I forget what. Negroes are scattered everywhere, yet I thought it odd to see this poor thing with her woolly head and glass-bead necklace, in the midst of a home group of Swiss children, making one think of Timbuctoo, and the

gold coast in the swamps of Wallenstadt. The links of thought are curiously put together; the same object which we at one moment pass without interest, will at another stir up a train of fancies and recollections that have slept within the brain perhaps from infancy. This child and her companions brought suddenly to my mind an African girl called Goa, who used to play with me, and tell me stories in far-off times, but whose existence I had long forgotten; in a moment her vivid apparition came before me, sitting with her legs under her on the grass, while wonders dropped from her broad lips like toads and diamonds in the story-book. A bold valley, opening serenely, and with a fine running pattern of mountains, from Wallenstadt to Sargens. Towards Ragatz, the valley widens; colossal rocks, but the level raw and marshy, with a thin covering of coarse grass and bulrush vegetation. Already we begin to feel Italy, or think we do, which amounts to the same thing. We have still, it is true, the cottages and log-huts of Switzerland; but the maize, the dirty forlorn villages, the minor inns, and the mode in which the vines are sometimes trained, are quite Italian;—I may add the locanda in which we lay awake last night at Ragatz. The plague of insects was upon us; I believe we should have

been better off at Sargens, but we wished to get on. Both the habitations and inhabitants look miserably dirty and neglected in this canton of Gall, at least in the idle part of it. Sargens and Ragatz are both mouldering, hopeless-looking places. The first is, however, rich in iron mines; the second happy in the neighbourhood of Pfyffer's baths, to which it owes any little summer prosperity it may enjoy. Cretins and half-cretins are awfully common, and almost every person we meet has the melancholy appendage of a goître, matured or incipient. I have seen but one instance of this frightful disease in the animal creation; the unfortunate dog who suffered the infliction looked like an unfinished Cerberus, but wagged his tail as gaily as if it had been only an ordinary dewlap.

An hour too late at Ragatz; two young and handsome females, equipped like Newmarket boys a little feminized, with redingottes, and trowsers of plaid, and jockey caps, but writing themselves down marchionesses and accompanied by their husbands, have taken possession of the best apartments, here, as in Italy, at the top of the house, and we are obliged to put up with wretched accommodations. Supped on Swiss soup, an awful composition (boiling water poured on the crusts of

the day before, with a little raw parsley floating on the top), cutlets, overdone and underdone, and the eternal fowl smothered in rice and boiled to rags; its juices having gone to flavour two or three gallons of the aforesaid fluid.

I have seldom felt myself more uncomfortable, than when I set out this morning for Pfyffer's baths mounted on a horse as high as a camel, with a saddle so contrived as to rock backwards and forwards with an insecure undulating movement, and a stirrup lengthened with packthread. Having a high respect for the authority of Ebel, who calls this a perilous pass, I began the ascent by a steep and rugged path through a forest of bright beech, with a sort of shabby nervous feel about my tall stumbling horse and tottering saddle, which I never recollect to have had before. But it was nothing after all, at least nothing worth talking about. An hour's mounting brought us to a path nearly level, winding through fresh buttercup meadows, and then on the deep descent that leads down immediately upon the baths. The look up through the valley from the heights above is beautiful, not so grandly thrown together as some things that we have seen, but bold and romantic. I have always thought that the perfection of scenery does not so much depend on the magni-

tude of objects, as on the proportion which they bear to each other, and their harmonious combination. Nature does every thing successfully; can be minute without littleness, and gorgeous even in her simplicity.

Down below, in the black depths of a rocky gully, stands the melancholy convent-looking house never warmed by a sun-beam, within which are the baths and the necessary accommodations for bathers; consisting of a wild looking eating room, and narrow cells—raw and gloomy—to sleep in. A cloisteral colonnade clings to the outward wall, and extends drearily along the front of the building, affording the means of exercise to those who desire what they call here a sheltered walk. Indeed there is no choice, unless a person be as agile as a goat, which invalids rarely are; for a narrow stripe of table ground, just wide enough to give standing room to three or four horses, is all that intervenes between this bleak colonnade and the mountain through which the winding descent is traced. Behind rolls the stormy Tamina, hemmed in at one side by the dark house and the impending cliffs; while on the other, a giant wall of perpendicular rock, starting up daringly and shutting out the world—almost the light of heaven, closes up the scene.

They say that invalids recover here; I wonder they do not go mad. Nothing is visible but the rock, the fearful gorge, the torrent, and a little sky. Nothing audible but the raving Tamina. We looked into the dreary room; the fair Italians were there, taking coffee. One had an English complexion, and soft eyes; the other a brilliant head of the Judith cast. Our guide proposed that we should visit the mineral springs, that boil up from the depth of an awful cavern, some hundred paces from the house. A bridge, thrown from rock to rock, crosses the flood, and a narrow ledge of planks fixed, I know not how, against the side of the rock and suspended over the fierce torrent, leads through a long dark chasm to the source. I ventured but a little way, for when I found myself on the terrifying shelf without the slightest balustrade, and felt it slippery from the continual spray, and saw nothing between us and the yawning gulf, to which darkness, thickening at every step, gave increased horror, I made a few rapid reflections on the folly of fool-hardiness; and feeling with Falstaff that the better part of valour is discretion, retreated more speedily than I had advanced. Gertrude and Amy were by this time out of sight; we shouted to them, but they were lost in the darkness of the horrible gorge. I

sat down on the rock, and passed a few uneasy moments. Terrible ones they would have been had I known the danger to which they were exposed; but I had no sooner escaped from the hanging shelf, than I felt ashamed of my cowardice, and what had appeared terrific, seemed, when I found myself again on terra firma, mere child's play. But their account of it was awful. I have never thought of it since without shuddering, or without a deep feeling of gratitude for their preservation.

In the joyous days of summer, when the world above is all life and brightness, this dreary cleft in the rock (for it is little more) sees the light of the sun only during four hours,—from eleven till three in the afternoon. The baths belong to the monks of a neighbouring monastery, who defray the expenses of the establishment and receive the emoluments. They are of the order of Black Benedictines—I like the name—it so well becomes the place; but they live in the midst of meadows and sunshine, and look down as from another world upon the reeking cauldron from which they derive their wealth.

Found the return to Ragatz more fatiguing than the ascent; but I clung to my camel with a tenacity that had something of vanity in it. "O

Athenians! how hard we labour for your applause." There is a great deal done in this world for the sake of the lookers-on, and by wiser heads than mine.

The road to Coire is uninteresting; meagre and marshy valleys, without much character. Coire has the open shops of Italy, and it has at least one professed beauty of the Italian cast, not exactly in the morning of her charms; the blue a little off the plum, but very striking. We caught a glimpse of her, just as we drove up to the inn; but like all beauties in the wane of their attractions, she shrunk from a close inspection and vanished while we gazed upon her.

After a night passed at Ragatz, it is positive happiness to find one's self at the inn at Coire, where every thing looks, and (still better) *is*, invitingly neat. A supper of trout, white partridges, small venison-looking mutton, and other mountain luxuries, perfectly well arranged, made up for the Spartan repast of the night before. Over and above our good cheer, we had the services of a waiter, half Grison, half Italian, perfect in his way, somewhat in the vale of years, but with an eye disciplined to solemn drollery, a honied voice, an opera step, and the tripping air of an antiquated Figaro, or that important personage, the barber

of a Spanish novel. Altogether, exceedingly original and amusing.

Pretty about Coire; the bridge, the river, the mountain screens, made a sweet moonlight picture, and the terrace of the episcopal palace commands a show view of high reputation; this we did not see. Good, but not remarkable, to Richenau, and beautiful to Tussis,—the gray leaguers had an inspiring country to struggle for. Richenau has wooded hills, a fine river, and a wooden bridge of a wide and airy span. We got out of the carriage, and walked through the gardens of the castle to a spot from which we looked down upon the confluence of the Rhine: rather an insipid family picture and like most river junctions, a thing that would be passed by, if not pointed out. The Lower Rhine sweeps round the base of a covered bridge, and pours its dark stream into the brighter volume of the Upper Rhine, a gentle river, to-day at least, (but rivers are as variable as pretty women) of an emerald tint and graceful movement that receives the cousinly embrace in a very calm cousin-like kind of way. There was little either striking or unusual in the scene, but I remembered that it was the Rhine, the "exulting river," the Rhine of Schaffhausen and of the beautiful Rhingau, and my heart paid it silent homage.

Near Retzins we again left the carriage, and turning to the left towards a convent at a little distance from the road, ascended a hill near to it for the purpose of obtaining a good view of the river. But the gentle elevation which looked like a hillock, and was in reality very little more, proved so steep and slippery, that we slid about like Milton's angels,—even our young firm-footed chamois tumbled down at every step; as for myself, I fell more than once flat upon my face, as if it had been the last pinch of the Mont-Blanc. It was a sweet scene, however, when we had conquered the rise, particularly from a promontory that projects into the Rhine and gives an opposite view of the convent on its rock, with its soft, home features about it. A chequering of wood, a bridge thrown over a tufted cleft, and sunny meadows with a fine setting-off of mountains; two or three gray ruins hung well on rocky points, and a long retreating gorge through which a river winds idly. —All good things, and cleverly put together in a bold free way, but with more of pleasantness than solemnity.

I had another long slide in returning, and but for L——'s prompt assistance, should have certainly found a *royal road* to the bottom. Gertrude was wickedly enjoying my dilemma, with a sly

backward glance as she glided swiftly before me; but it is not always safe to look over the shoulder, as Orpheus and Lot's wife knew to their cost,—down she went—rolling round and round, till she was safely deposited on level ground, in a bed of clover. A moment after little Mimi followed her example; when all were landed unfractured at the bottom of this redoubtable mole-hill, we laughed heartily at our misfortunes, and at nothing more than my eminent cowardice in the field of action.

The square tower, frequent in some parts of Switzerland, is often seen here; each has its story attached to it, and so has every chapel, rock, and ruin in this romantic country. Tales of ogres, dragons, and chimeras dire, are still told with edifying gravity. I thought such things were gone by even in the mountains. Ghosts (they say) are going out of fashion, but the fairies have still their partisans. I was glad to hear it! they become true pastoral scenery so well, that it would be a pity to drive them away from the wild copse and the green sward, or to break the spell of their moonlight dew, or their honey flowers. I always loved those airy abstractions; and who does not, that has ever revelled in the balmy freshness of the Midsummer-Night's Dream (that true south wind

of poetry), or joyed in the quaint vagaries of Milton's Queen Mab.

Approaching Tussis, the valley exhibits broad traces of the river's devastations. We begin to lose the bright verdure of Switzerland, but we get a little of the colouring of Italy, and something of the character of her hill countries. The tall, spare tower, or its ruins, hangs on its isolated eminence, as the convents and villages do in that delightful land. The women, too, have something Italian in their eyes, but they are monsters of uncleanness; the girls at Tussis look as if just caught, and so nasty; and the old women like uncombed and ragged Hecubas, or the serpent-haired gentlewomen of the Greek mythology.

Market day—and such a rabble!—such vulgar dirt, and unwashed ugliness. Nothing even of picturesque wretchedness, but the odd garments and wild features of the old furies. Yet this is said to be a thriving place, a place where people are rich and flourishing; a "beau bourg," Ebel calls it, comparing it, I suppose, with other bourgs of the Grisons, just as a person might talk of the splendour of Tobolsk, on his way home from the more remote and savage deserts of Siberia. We excited very considerable interest amongst the congregated gorgons of the principal street where we halted,

who seemed to view us rather with curious than admiring eyes. I thought of the fair lover of cut steel sharps and nuns' thread at Zoug, and of her straight-forward industry, turning neither to the right nor to the left, but sewing on, as if to sew was the aim and end of existence; and contrasted it with the unthrifty carelessness of a girl who superintended a fruit-stall in our vicinity, and who, while she gazed upon us with wide open eyes, let her bit of work (nothing so idle as a *bit of work*) lie untouched before her, and suffered the higgling folk who hung about, to handle her apples, and discuss her walnuts, and pocket them too, if they pleased, without let or hindrance.

CHAPTER XIV.

VIA MALA — SPLUGHEN — CHIAVENNA — RIVA — LAKE OF COMO — DOMASO — BELAGGIO — VILLA MELZI — VILLA SOMERIVA — TREMAZZO.

THE position of Tussis is fine; all the towns here are well placed. It looks across the river into the opening of the Via Mala,—the Via Mala! the lone and wonderful. As we entered the gorge, the sun, then in its meridian, glimmered upon us through forests of pine over crags whose height the eye could scarcely master. I have now seen much of Alp and Appennine, and no longer look at nature with a fresh and unfastidious eye; but I have never seen any thing so sublime, and so indescribable in its sublimity as the Via Mala. Worked up with all the prowess of unsubdued nature, and marked with all her mysterious touches, its remarkable depth and narrowness give it a distinctive character that does not belong (as far as I have seen) to any other mountain pass. While the sun plays brightly on the rocky summits, its light falls

into the deep defile with the colouring of evening, and in this deep defile is the Rhine in its fury; but still green and beautiful, breaking over every wild impediment, and then hiding itself in depths so profound, that neither eye nor ear can follow it; even its melancholy roar is lost. One short pass between two bridges made us clap our hands and glorify, yet silently. In such scenes one does not stop to talk and praise; an inward and intense feeling of reverence and admiration takes the place of words. A stream of light coming through a long rent in the rock under the last bridge, has a singular effect; it looks like a light from another world, like the back-ground of a resurrection. These solemn aspects of nature breed awful contemplations. I can understand the high wrought fancies of the fathers of the desert, their angelic visitations, and holy communings with the spirits of the blest. I can imagine how the deep and noiseless solitude, the changeful heavens, the giant forms and awful mysteries of nature, may operate on the mind of lonely and imaginative man, and that the solitary dweller in the deep forest, or he who sits "before the starry threshold" of the heavens and attributes to himself supernatural powers, may be oftener the dupe of a too exalted imagination than an intentional impostor.

Yet this is not altogether the spot for a conversion à la Rancé. Grand, and amazingly powerful as is the whole scene, it is not chilling. The gray desert, and utter stagnation of nature, suit the Trappist. But here, is a depth and power of colouring like Titian's back-grounds:—gloomy, even awful, but not cold or appalling. I did not see either birds or flowers, but I think they might both live here, and perhaps do so, in a more congenial season.

Dined at Ardeen, common-place scenery after what we have left behind us; but again on quitting it, we mounted upwards, and as twilight came on entered another pass of wonderful character, darkened by masses of rock such as might wall in a world. The light was declining, a red ray still lingered on the tops of the mountains, while darkness was spreading fast below. Passed through an arch-way, and came upon a scene of gentle beauty. A river babbling through quiet meadows, and farther on the sheds of some charcoal burners, and fragile bridges, rarely traversed but by their hardy footsteps; mills in lonely situations, and wild-looking wood cutters leaning on their rude staffs with the savage air of Retzsch's miners, in the outlines to Fridolin.

A large inn at Splughen with galleries, and cells like a monastery. The village boasts five or six houses, which in the clear moonlight look white and showy; they are the dwellings (our host says) of some Italian traders. The Splughen is open all the winter for the transport of merchandise on sledges.

The landlord expatiates on the winter gaieties of his village; fire-side gossiping, I suppose, or wine bibbing, or perhaps sledge races, perhaps balls. Our question of "Que faites-vous ici l'hiver?" has often been answered by "O! nous avons de jolis bals," in worse places than Splughen.

Looking towards my bed, I found that it was not furnished with a pillow. I asked the host to procure me one; he said he would send the mistress, but Vashti came not; so finding there was nothing to be hoped for, I lay down expecting the night-mare, but slept as soundly as if I had had one of down, or even of hops. But unquestionably a pillow is a thing to travel with; mine was unluckily forgotten at Glaris, and I find cause to regret it every night.

A cold, dreary, naked country, and a road winding most elaborately, terrace hanging over terrace, tedious zig-zags, and no redeeming scenery,—a

palpably artificial road; all roads are so, but some less glaringly, and one does not like to see much of man's handicraft mingling with the bold free workmanship of nature, even when a difficulty is smoothed or a convenience added by it. Our light infantry ran up all the steeps and zig-zags, and when I expected to see them half-crippled, looked as fresh as if they had come up on a cloud, or borrowed Clavileno* for the occasion. A dogana at Monte di Splugha, a melancholy hamlet, almost buried in snow in winter. The officer was civil, merely opened a trunk, and went through the form of looking into it; no insolence of office, nor any fee hinted at. Again a scene of savage nakedness, but just at the commencement of a succession of galleries, the descent opens finely, in a soft rich Italian tone. The interior of the galleries have a kind of cloisteral perspective, but look too artificial. Brick and mortar cannot produce the same effect as a perforated rock, or a natural grotto. Hitherto we have seen no scattered habitations, but now the sides of the mountains are clustered with pitchy looking hamlets. Already we feel the sun and air of Italy breathe and shine upon us,

Vide Don Quixote.

and in this air and sun there is something that affects the mind as a delicious perfume, or a sweet strain of music does the senses; something which softens and disposes it to receive images of mild splendour and gracious beauty. The road still winds curiously and tediously; after having descended during an hour, we found ourselves exactly at the foot of the gallery from which we had turned down. To gain an extent of a mile, it is sometimes necessary to wind up and down along a distance of two or three, perhaps more.

All Italian at Campo Dolcino. Here a Madonna, there a St. John. Dungeon-like looking houses, with barred windows, and women thrusting their pale faces through the apertures. A church open, and crowded with females in large white veils thrown back from their faces, and a rabble of boys in scarlet waistcoats and coloured nightcaps, shouting as we passed, though gravely rebuked by their elders, in coats of sober coffee-colour and spreading beavers.*

* Amongst my notes I find one which I had overlooked, extolling a cascade near to Campo Dolcino, and speaking of a human profile in the rocks which, like the Turk's head in the fire is probably only visible (to use the magnetisers' phrase) to the *lucid*.

Fair and delicious Italy! I cannot, with all my national preferences, and they are strong, but pity the poor Corinne, and think, when I look down into your soft valleys, and feel the glowing warmth of your bright sky, and recollect the treasures of art and the world of beauty which lie hidden within your bosom, that she had some reason at her side when she ran away from the Northumberland tea-parties. This descent is so beautiful, particularly between the village of Santa-Maria and San Giacomo, that I feel my mind going back to eighteen as I look at it. Hamlets, divinely placed, hang on the sides of hills covered with the rich foliage of the Spanish chestnut, which expands its charming shade over huge fragments of rock uncouthly or gracefully shaped, as nature happened to be in or out of humour. This chaos of vegetation and sterility is fine and striking, and lone and loveable. Yet I can conceive that many persons may prefer the descent from the Simplon upon Domo d'Ossola; it is more showy, perhaps more lively; but if an error of memory does not make me unjust to its beauties, I should say that the vale of Chiavenna opens into a softer perspective, and is in a richer style of colouring. A person of much imagination once told me, that the earth in

Italy was of a different colour from any other earth; I am not quite sure of this, but the sky, the air, the mountains certainly are. It seems too fanciful to say that there is something like a visible fragrance in the atmosphere; but the warm gauzy vapour, to which the gradual transitions and soft outlines of Italian landscape owe so much, is instantly recognised. As we wind round and round the sides of the mountains, looking into that delightful world that lies before us, the grapes hang in purple clusters from opera-looking trellises on each side of the road, and girls sit under the shade of the chestnut offering baskets of peaches for sale, with now and then a face amongst them that, after the rough visages of Switzerland, is a benediction to the eye.

But all in Italy is not opera decoration, and the gloomy Albergo at Chiavenna has a dirty reality about it, that leaves the imagination quite at rest. All was shut up when we arrived; it is rather unusual to remain unanswered, though knocking loudly at the door of an inn, and in the noon-day too; but so it was. A few stragglers turned out from an adjoining coffee-house, and having gratified that spirit of curiosity which animates the lounging Italian as much as the

volatile Frenchman, and smiled deridingly at our difficulties, turned in again to the billiard table. At last a dirty waiter made his appearance; la Padrona, he said, and all the family were at church. I suppose he thought this had a moral sound and would tell well, for the Padrona was in bed and asleep; L— took upon him to curtail her siesta, and we were at length admitted. Then came the Padrone himself, evidently descended from the apothecary so fatally remembered by the Montague;—pale, thin, shirtless, and almost sleeveless, but smooth and voluble, with a flexibility of features and fingers purely Italian. He condescended to wait upon us at dinner, discussed the genealogy of the Boromeos, and the ramifications of the Littas in their three branches, pressing the fore-finger of each hand together and expanding the thumbs in a way that our rigid northern muscles might vainly try to emulate; while his lips became more livid and his cheek paler and paler, as he quickened in vehemence. From him we learned that the jockeys of Ragatz, of whom with something like irreverence we deemed, were Milanese ladies of high rank; a Litta, and a Trotti, brides and beauties, who were making a rambling tour with their husbands, and had been staying here for some days.

From the state of the staircase, and of the dismal sala, we took to our dormitories full of fearful anticipations; but the beds were excellent, and very clean. To sleep was however impossible,—three or four men drinking in a hole, by courtesy called a *vicolo*, and vociferating as Italians only can vociferate: two little girls singing dolefully on an open staircase; a third fanning herself with a huge fan that made a sort of flurried clatter, and raving at intervals at the mournful vocalists; and an infant squalling as if it were being strangled, combined, with the usual *tintamarre* of an inn, to drive away sleep for many hours.

As we departed this morning, our shirtless host stood like a spectre in the gateway; if he be Teodoro Fumo,—(and one so called keeps an inn here,)—he deserves his name, as Chiavenna deserves to be a town of the middle ages, though I do not know whether it is or not.

I have now crossed the Alps at three different points, the Simplon, the Splughen, and the Mont Cenis; the last greatly inferior to either as an Alpine pass, but followed by a country most unaccountably overlooked by travellers,—the wild Haute Maurienne,—powerful in many parts and often beautiful in its power. It is strange that this fine scenery has not got a name, while many

things so much inferior are cried up to the skies. My heart took to it at once. My beloved Como did not look in beauty this morning, as we hailed it from Riva before the mists were up, or the sun had warmed it into splendour. Riva is an unfavourable point, or seemed so in a drizzly haze; nothing about it gives promise of the hereafter, nothing announces the wonderful beauty that is to come,—perhaps I ought to say, nothing announced it through the low-hanging mists of the morning. Embarked in a crazy boat for Domaso, and as we rowed along, saw an array of cows take to the lake and swim across it; a projecting point of land narrows it just there, but our boatmen said they (that is, the cows) made nothing of half a mile. Something neatly turned might be edged in here about Europa and the nymphs her companions, who tossed their white arms in sorrow and wailed along the shore; or the knowing little Tritons, who sounded their shells and held the hem of her petticoat out of the water, while she, the fair Phœnician princess, kept her seat firmly on the broad back of the original *bœuf gras*.—But we are at Domaso, and the coffee boils.

A dirty floor, a noisy woman, windows looking on the sparkling lake,—vile coffee, delicious fruit,

and fish fresh caught and not ill dressed, served as a breakfast luxury. In a little time, Domaso will be a thriving place, thanks to the steam-boat that arrives here every morning at an early hour from Como, and departs again with its freight at twelve o'clock. The good folks of the town seem to take an intense interest in both the boat and the passengers. The quay was crowded with gazers, who probably neglect their daily avocations for the indulgence of this idling propensity. Greasy artisans and bloated matrons, kissing and embracing their friends, and seeing them safe on board, as if they were shipping them off for Botany Bay, or Van Diemen's Land. *Smoked* off with a cargo of Italian females and their cavalieri, a stray German, two priests, and a neophyte. But as we passed the villages on the borders of the lake, we took in numerous reinforcements, and amongst others, a boat load of respectable looking females, in floating veils and toilettes rather studied. A rope was thrown out to facilitate their approach, which their foremost rower chanced to miss; instantly a howl was set up by the ladies,—one shrieked out "perduta!—perduta!"—another extended her brawny arm, decorated with a bracelet of Berlin iron, as if to grasp the unlucky

rope; all screamed in concert except two, who still in possession of their senses, quietly stepped up the side of our boat, and left their companions to invoke Bacchus, by his head, or by his body (as the Italians are fond of doing in critical moments), until their fears and their breath were exhausted.

A steam-boat on the Lake of Como! — the Larian lake! What a horrid affair! a steam-boat with its smoking chimney, its business air, luxurious accommodations, and odour of enterprise and innovation. We were very indignant *indeed*, at the bare mention of it. O no! The crazy machine, with a rough wooden bench, a coarse canvass awning, and two or three bare-legged rowers, was the true thing—the only thing in keeping with romantic scenery. Thus thinking, we embarked, feeling it rather an act of condescension to do so; but the day proved very rough, and the little barks ploughed up and down sickeningly, if not fearfully, while we glided on in unruffled pomp, compelled to acknowledge that if the Latin sail and scudding movement be the most picturesque, the steam-boat is certainly the most commodious; and feeling a little like the asses in Pilpay, when they disdained the shoeing

proposition, wisely crying out "Our bare hoofs and the flinty roads for ever,—huzza!"

But every thing must have its dark, as well as its bright side, and this new mode of conveyance, which seems to afford a recreation in high repute with the respectable people of the neighbourhood, and to be used as much in the way of amusement as a Thames wherry, has reduced the poor barcaiuoli to a state of inaction, and consequent distress. A certain number appealed to the benevolence of the Emperor of Austria, who graciously promised to each the sum of two francs a-day during twelve months. But as yet no day of reckoning has arrived, and the poor men begin to find that kaiser is not German for prompt payment.

"Ah che bel riposo!"—Beautiful Belaggio is thus marked in the traveller's book, by one who felt and enjoyed this delicious scenery,—and who does not, that has a touch of fancy or feeling about him? When we were last here, the pretty inn did not exist, but now we find as many comforts as can reasonably be expected; excellent fare, civility, and an airy apartment with a divine spread of the lake before it, and a moon that looks as if it was disengaged from the sky, and was travelling along self-sustained, disdaining even to rub its

skirts against the blue and silver dome in which—in other countries — it condescends to frame its benign visage.

Loitered away hours this evening, on the terrace of the villa Serbelloni, looking from its airy height on that supreme view, that coronal of sweet and beautiful things, that keeps its pre-eminence in the memory above all other forms and combinations of picturesque beauty. We had passed the morning at the villa Melzi, admiring its world of flowers, pleased with the cheerful distribution of the apartments, the marble floors, the walls painted in arabesques, fresh and cool as a summer seraglio, and the simplicity that characterises the whole of this charming residence. One of its happiest and most Italian features is the broad *perron*, against whose base the waters break with a soft splashing sound, that disposes the mind to thought, and perhaps—to sleep; a gentle indulgence to which the eye-lids readily yield, in this warm and perfumed atmosphere. The hanging terrace, broad flight of marble steps, fountains, columns, and colonnades of an Italian garden, become its skies, and harmonize with the highly decorated style of its villas. White marble nymphs, who would look raw and shivering in an English

parterre, take their places amidst orange groves and citron bowers as a thing of course. I speak of this architectural style of gardening in its magnificence; in its meagreness, it is raw and stony, unless the redeeming pine (the stone pine) comes in, and then every thing is turned into picture. There is an appearance of recent improvement, of visible progression, of some effort of care or taste always going on in an English villa garden, that would be perhaps unsuitable to the stationary and (though splendid) often melancholy character of Italian scenery. Every thing in Italy tells the story of the past, and tells it with a sorrowful force, to which the antique urn and mutilated statue, the embellishments that have outstood ages, give additional strength. In a moral point of view, this is melancholy; but as a picture, perfect.

It is not, however, on the lake of Como that this becomes obvious; here some things are new, and some highly dressed, smiling, and flowery. But there is nothing, after all, that stirs up the heart, like the tangled wood walks and grassy terraces of the villa Serbelloni, looking upon things of which the eye never tires. The old house, half convent, half villa, has points about it that tho-

roughly suit the character of the place, and make one regret that a fine *palazzo* is projected, which will probably not become it so well. But every thing becomes the skies of Italy, from the severe simplicity of the antique, to the splendour of Palladio; from the weeds and ruins of the Colisæum, to Bernini's colonnades, and the lofty formality of the majestic pine.

Evening approaches, and here we sit on a low parapet, looking through the branches of an old oak on the mountain-framed mirror spread out beneath us, listening to long stories of the Littas, and the Trottis, and the banished Porro, and of the poor nuns too, who had long been established in a convent in the opposite vineyards; but being in the revolutionary times prohibited from recruiting their ranks when a vacancy occurred, dropped off one by one, until the last poor solitary soul, who lived to mourn the companions of her simple enjoyments and more austere duties, was called to receive the reward of her well intentioned, if not meritorious sacrifice.

September 20th.—This morning my brother and Mr. M—— joined us. Rowed across to the villa Someriva, admired again its myrtle groves, its bowers hung with ripe lemons, perfumed terraces,

and trickling fountains, so eminently Italian, and turned up our noses at its squab gods and other atrocities. Preferred the interior of the Melzi—the altogether of it, in short. But Thorwaldsen's wonderful bas-reliefs, and some few other works of art, make a visit to the villa Someriva very interesting. An overwhelming majority of bad pictures, few indeed of the best worth looking at. The Triumphs of Alexander, though exposed to view, are not yet taken entirely out of their cases; perhaps they may never be put up here; the old Count is dead, and the young one is said to love the atmosphere of Paris better than the sunny heaven of Italy, and to prefer living beauty to the most classical nymph of antiquity.

Looked into Cadenabia, and forward to sweet Menaggio; then turned round, and passing the villa Someriva, walked through the village of Tremazzo, on the Tremazzani shore. Very clean, and full of character; a favourable specimen of the Italian *paese* of the best kind. The principal street passing under arcades parallel with the lake, the lateral alleys steep and narrow running up the mountains in flights of irregular steps, houses hanging one above the other, with here and there a painted balcony projecting over the path, and a

head, full of southern character, bending down from it. Many country houses of rather a superior cast, are thrown about here, and the pretty way of arranging the vines (trailing them over a flat trellis roof, supported in front by pilasters forming an open colonnade that at a distance looks like the façade of a temple) adds much to the originality of the picture. No people on earth have so acute a perception of the picturesque as the Italians. Give them rags, and they contrive to look—if old, like Michael Angelo's sybils, and if young and handsome, like the rich creations of Titian or Giorgone. Let them have a vine, and they twist it into a leafy canopy or throw it off into festoons, which Poussin might have borrowed for an Arcadian back-ground.

But however tasteful the general effect may be, it does not do to examine things here too closely. We talked this morning to our little waiter (a young girl of the village), about her coiffure, her elaborate plat, and the twenty-three silver bodkins that were fixed into it. It had all been arranged, she said, five days before, and in two days more she would take it down, make it smooth, and then fasten it up again. This is the Belaggio mode, once a week the toilet and then no more thought

about it till the seventh day comes again. Her bodkins, she added, were rather tarnished, but then she slept in them, which accounted for it.*

21st.—Passed the whole day, and such a day!—in the Serbelloni gardens. My brother brought up his sunny mind and charming susceptibility of enjoyment, Mr. M—— his store of thought and knowledge, and we our happy hearts and joyous feelings. Our host of Belaggio, too, brought up something rarely overlooked, even in the most sentimental moments; an excellent dinner, which we were kindly allowed to place in a saloon looking on both branches of the lake, and all the necromancy of its shores. Three large windows open upon beds of flowers, and arcades covered with the foliage of plants that are exotics with us; beyond these gay parterres a bank swells upward, hung with the contrasting verdure of the oak, the olive, the tall spare cypress, and the softer green of many summer trees; and higher than all, the feathery outline of the Scotch fir, appears firmly traced on a clear blue sky, while its bark glows and reddens in the evening sun.

* We remained at Belaggio eight days, which, added to five, made thirteen, but the hair was never touched.

A door opens from this charming saloon on a truly Italian vista. Stone steps rising in perspective and shaded by broad laurels, through which the sunbeams dart slantingly, chequering at intervals the grassy openings. Large vases, from which cape jessamine and heliotrope diffuse their foreign odours, are placed at regular distances. Aloes grow as weeds do with us, and many of the sharp and broad-leaved things, which we cherish in our hot-houses, shoot out or trail along here with an untutored luxuriance that shows them indigenous. Indeed all rare and beautiful things seem to be so in this soft Arcadia.

What a spot to sit in, and talk over happy subjects, as we did. Mr. M—— dwelt on our village ramble with delight; it had interested him, as simple scenes of strong character always interest highly intellectual minds. All the fine things about us had sharpened our appetites; we found our carp and beccaficos, our grapes and truffles, figs and coffee, the most delicious that we had ever tasted, and sat talking down the sun until the sweet evening air tempted us out again,—and then we lingered amongst the vineyards, and on the platform before the old castle, till the bats came wheeling round us, and the red lights had

faded entirely from the tops of the mountains;—when we descended to our sleeping quarters, some running, others lagging, but all agreeing that we had passed a day not soon to be forgotten.

While the scenes of this morning are yet impressed in all their living sweetness on my memory, I sit at my window and think what a summer paradise this would be to live in. Better even than Interlacken,—more uninterrupted quiet, and a softer colouring. Nothing ever approached the colouring of the hill countries in Italy. In Switzerland, nature cuts with a harder chisel,—grandly,—magnificently,—but perhaps too distinctly. Here, the undefined outline melting into the sky and mingling with it, takes the vague shading which may be called the sentiment of landscape,—the poetic distance, that gives an impulse to the mind, and sends it bounding forward far beyond the narrow sphere of actual vision. How delightful it would be to live like sea gypsies,* floating all day long upon the lake,—steering up to Gravedona, and growing poetical amongst the mountains,—cheating the hot hours in the shades of Luchino,† where the sun never shines, or under

* Vide Lalla Rookh.

† I cannot find this name on the map of Como, but write it from the sound.

the fig-trees of Cavagnola, or loitering out the cooler ones on some of those balmy terraces "où les citronniers fleurissent." Then, if the gay fit prompt, or the musical one, dropping down to Como, and passing the evening with Tancredi, or the gentle Desdemona; and should this whet the appetite for finer things, driving on to Milan, to meet them again on higher ground, or to shudder with La Pallarina, or sit down before the Hagar of the Brera, and think what hard hearts they had in Canaan. Delightful it would be, with health to enjoy and friends to share it;—with such blessings, O, what a gift is life! when we are wise and grateful enough not to abuse it.

END OF VOL. I.

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